

IOANNIS SPATHARAKIS

**THE PICTORIAL CYCLES OF THE *AKATHISTOS*
HYMN FOR THE VIRGIN**

With 726 Illustrations



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FOREWORD

The pictorial cycles of the Akathistos reveal how the artists and their sponsors interpreted each of the twenty-four stanzas of this celebrated hymn to the Virgin. They may help scholars, other than art historians, who have neglected this visual aspect until now in their vast bibliography, to form a better idea of the multiple meaning of the Akathistos text. My book aims to enhance the comparatively limited bibliography on the illustration of the Akathistos, also by including a few practically unknown cycles, mainly from Crete.

The material for this study was mainly gathered when I was lecturing at the University of Crete in Rethymnon (1980-1990). I studied there six Akathistos cycles decorating churches, on which I shall primarily focus; equal attention I shall, however, pay to the cycles outside Crete. In total, twenty-two cycles of the Akathistos are examined here, painted in murals, manuscripts and icons. Unfortunately, all twenty-four stanzas of the hymn are not preserved in all of them.

The first part of this book investigates the iconography of the Akathistos per cycle. But if one would also like to know how the pictures look per stanza, he will be faced with the tiring task of searching for it in every cycle. Therefore, the decoration of the Akathistos is also examined per stanza in a separate chapter.

The various cycles are illustrated in this book with approximately three hundred reproductions in colour, as many as I could obtain. The black and white reproductions display them per stanza, so that the reader can perceive the iconography of a certain stanza in almost a glance. Comparative material appears in both kinds of reproductions, colour and black and white.

Many colleagues and friends helped me in various ways in this study. My sincere thanks are due to Prof. Olga Popova, Prof. Engelina Smirnova and Dr. Zaigraikina Svetlana in Moscow, Prof. Rainer Stichel in Münster, Prof. Dimitrios Triantaphyllopoulos and Stylianos Perdakis in Nicosia, Prof. Maria Aspra Bardabaki, Dr. Efthalia Constantinides and Dr. Chrysanthé Baltogianne in Athens, Prof. Georgios Velenis in Thessaloniki, Prof. Corina Popa, Prof. Alexandru Barnea and Mr. Aurelian Stroe in Bucharest, Dr. Elizabeta Dimitrova, Skopje, Drs. Douwe Wiersma, Emmen, Drs. Gerard van der Hout (d. 2003) in The Hague, Dr. Stauroula Sdrolia, 7th EBA in Larisa, Dr. Virginia Albani, 5th EBA in Kalamata, Dr. Vasiliki Tsamakda in Heidelberg, my wife Julia Gerasimova for

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Leiden, October 2005

INTRODUCTION

The Akathistos is, as it is well known, a hymn dedicated to the Virgin. She is lauded in it for her important role in the Incarnation of God, having as purpose the redemption of the mankind. The hymn is called Akathistos, because it is sung before a standing congregation. It has been variously dated between shortly after the Council of Ephesus in 431 and the middle of the sixth century.¹ The author is unknown, but it has been occasionally attributed to Romanos the Melodos² (6th century). It is a single alphabetic acrostic, consisting of twenty-four stanzas (*oikoi*). It is mainly divided, as regards its content, into two parts: a 'historical' and a 'theological' one. The first part (*oikoi* 1-12) refers to the early life of Christ, from the Annunciation to the Virgin to the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, and derives from Gospel books. The second part (*oikoi* 13-24) exalts the Incarnation of Christ and his double nature, and glorifies at the same time the Virgin and Christ. Twelve different salutations (*chairetismoi*) follow each odd *oikos*, to which a thirteenth *chairetismos* as refrain is added at the end (*hail, wedded maiden and virgin*). The even *oikoi* include no salutations and end with a simple *Alleluia*.

The decoration of the 'historical' part is mainly based on already existing iconography;³ for *oikos* 4, however, a new iconography was introduced in most

¹ Wellesz, E., *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, Oxford 1961, 183f. Trypanis, C.A., *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica* (Wiener Byzantinische Studien, V), Vienna 1968, 1-28, esp. 19. Peltomaa, Mari Leena, *The Image of the Virgin in the Akathistos Hymn* (The Medieval Mediterranean, 35), Leiden, 2001, 113-114, concluded that the Council of Chalcedon in 451 is a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the Akathistos.

² Wellesz, *Byzantine Music*, *op. cit.*, 191-197. Trypanis, *Cantica*, *op. cit.*, 21. Grosdidier de Matons, J., Romanos le Mélode et les origines de la poésie religieuse à Byzance, Paris, 1977, 36. For more bibliography on the Akathistos and the state of research, see the recent publication by Peltomaa, *Akathistos*, 40-48.

³ For the illustration of the Akathistos, see Aspra Bardabake, M., *Οι μικρογραφίες του Ακαθίστου στον κώδικα Garrett 13*, Princeton, Athens, 1992, with a summary in English on pp. 153-158. Babić, G., "L'iconographie constantino-politaine de l'Akathiste de la Vierge à Cozia (Valachie)," *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloskog Instituta (Recueil des Travaux de l'Institut d'Études Byzantines)*, 14-15 (1973), 173-189. Babić, G., "Les fresques de Sušica en Macédoine et l'iconographie originale de leurs images de la vie de la Vierge," *CahArch*, 12 (1962), 303-339. Chatzinikolaou, A., in *RbK*, I, 94-96, s.v. *Akathistos hymnos*. Constantinides, E.C., *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson in Northern Thessaly*, 2 Vols. (Publications of the Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens, No. 2), Athens, 1992, I, 134-177. Grozdanov,

of the cycles. The decoration of the 'theological' part had to be almost entirely invented according to the text and the various interpretations given to each stanza. One of the iconographic innovations in this part of the hymn is mentioned by Velmans: simple believers, among whom cantors, appear in the scenes next to the Virgin and Christ. The imperial iconography has also played a role in these representations.¹ Portraits of emperors are seen in the decoration of the last oikoi, which have been considered as containing elements of typical Constantinopolitan icon veneration.²

Although an early hymn, the pictorial cycles of the Akathistos that have been preserved suggest that it was only during the Paleologan era that it was illustrated in wall paintings, manuscripts and icons. The earliest preserved cycles date from ca. 1300 A.D., in a period during which Mariolatry was increased and several iconographic themes were introduced. Lafontaine-Dosogne thought that the historical circumstances after the re-conquest of Constantinople in 1261 by Michael VIII (1259-1282) formed a favourable climate for the creation of illustrations for the Akathistos;³ the figure of the Virgin appeared on the coins of this emperor and his son Andronikos II (1282-1328) and the icon of the Virgin *Blachernitissa* was venerated as protector of the city by Michael VIII and other emperors. Hesychasm has been considered to have influenced the iconography of the second part of the Akathistos.⁴ Pätzold saw a political meaning in the illustrations of the Akathistos, which forebode a victory on the Islamic threat; she placed the origin of the illustrations in Hesychastic monasteries outside Constantinople, in particular on Mount Athos; she considered that the earliest preserved cycles appeared in Thessaloniki, because it was the first city outside Mount Athos in which the disputes about Hesychasm took place.⁵ She stated,

C., "Ilustracija himni Bogorodičinog Akatista u crkvi Bogorodice Perivlepte u Ohridu," *Mélanges Svetozar Radojčić*, Belgrade, 1969, 39-53, with a summary in French on pp. 53-54. Lafontaine-Dosogne, J., "L'illustration de la première partie de l'Hymne Akathiste et sa relation avec les mosaïques de l'Enfance de la Kariye Djami," *Byzantion*, 54 (1984), 648-702. Lafontaine-Dosogne, Dečani, 314-316. Lucchesi Palli, E., in *LCI*, 1, 86-89, s.v. *Akathistos-Hymnus*. Pätzold, A., *Der Akathistos-Hymnos. Die Bilderzyklen in der byzantinischen Wandmalerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und christlichen Archäologie), Stuttgart, 1989. Velmans, T., "Une illustration inédite de l'Acathiste et l'iconographie des hymnes liturgiques à Byzance," *CahArch*, 22 (1972), 131-165. Ευγγόπουλος, Α., "Αἱ τοιογραφαί τοῦ Ἀκαθίστου εἰς τὴν Παναγίαν τῶν Χαλκίων Θεσσαλονίκης," *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 7 (1973-74), 61-77, with a summary in French on pp. 66-67. Most of the literature cited in this note includes an extensive bibliography.

¹ Velmans, *Acathiste*, 152-154.

² Babić, *Acathiste*, 186-188. Grabar, A., "Une source d'inspiration de l'iconographie byzantine tardive: les cérémonies du culte de la Vierge," *CahArch*, 25 (1976), 143-162.

³ Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Acathiste*, 652 and 698-699.

⁴ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 91-99, has devoted a chapter on this influence.

⁵ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 103.

that her conclusions were based on what has been preserved, by which she meant mainly fourteenth-century monumental painting. In leaving out of consideration the cycles painted in manuscripts and icons, which may have been produced in Constantinople or illustrated under its influence, her conclusions cannot be accurate. Constantinides placed the origin of the Akathistos cycle within the decade of 1285-1295 in Constantinople or Mount Athos, after the Hesychasts prevailed in 1282 A.D. above the Unionists.¹

There is, however, no evidence that the illustration of the Akathistos originated in Hesychastic centres and it is unthinkable that it was a monopoly of the Hesychasts. In the church of the Panagia in Roustika, e.g., in which an Akathistos cycle is painted, as we shall see, the depiction of the Transfiguration is omitted from the iconographic program; because this scene is very important for the Hesychastic theology, one may exclude the possibility that the Akathistos cycle was painted in this church under the influence of the Hesychastic movement.

The existence of illustrated Akathistos cycles before the Paleologan era has been suggested in the past on the basis of an Annunciation depiction. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou² based such a theory on the Annunciation icon in the St. Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai dating ca. 1200 A.D.³ (Figs. 301-302). She associated the Child in grisaille on the chest of the Virgin, the inscription on the icon O XAIPETICMOC (the Salutation) and the Holy Ghost in the form of a golden dove with the first four stanzas of the Akathistos;⁴ she also connected the river in the foreground of the icon with the *chairetismos* 6 of stanza 11 and *chairetismos* 6 of stanza 21 of the Akathistos; the wall in the lower background would be a visualisation of stanza 19 in which the Virgin is called *Defence of virgins* (τείχος = wall) and other salutations of the Akathistos. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou knows that these similes appear not only in the Akathistos Hymn, but also in the service of the Akathistos, which she cites, and, I should like to add, by hundreds in other hymns or homilies for the Virgin, written by known or anonymous authors. The particularities of this icon may have been influenced by the text of the Akathistos, or any other text, but not by pictures. In my opinion, one scene only, especially the Annunciation scene, cannot furnish sufficient evidence for the existence of a lost illustrated cycle of an Akathistos with twenty-

¹ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 176.

² Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou, E., "Εικονογραφικές παρατηρήσεις σὲ μιὰ εἰκόνα τοῦ Εὐαγγελισμοῦ στὸ Σινᾶ," *Κέρνος*, Τιμητικὴ προσφορά στὸν καθηγητὴ Γεώργιο Μπακαλάκη, Thessaloniki, 1972, 80-83.

³ For this icon see Weitzmann, *Verkündigungssikone*, *passim*. Mouriki, D. in *Sinai*, 107-108, 385 note 36, with extensive bibliography. Vokotopoulos, *Icons*, 202, figs. 49-50.

⁴ See the entire text of the Akathistos in Greek and a translation in English, including the salutations (*chairetismoi*), at the end of this book.

four scenes. The same argument can be used against the theory of Gounaris:¹ He presupposed the existence of pictorial Akathistos cycles, particularly in illuminated manuscripts, because the Annunciation scene in the church of the Virgin Kosmosoteira in Pherrai (Vira) from the middle of the twelfth century is not painted where he expected it to be.² My conclusion on the matter is that one should wait until real cycles or a number of characteristic Akathistos scenes from an earlier date have been discovered, before asserting that they existed prior to the Paleologan era.

The starting point of examining the Akathistos in this publication will be the cycles painted in Cretan churches, which are practically unknown. It will be proved that they contribute to a better knowledge of the decoration of this significant subject. The various depictions of the oikoi in Crete will be primarily compared to each other in order to establish possible dependence among them; in the second place, they will be compared to Akathistos cycles outside Crete for establishing probable relation to them. Equal attention will be, therefore, paid to the cycles outside Crete. I shall particularly focus on Akathistos cycles which are less known, at least in the West, e.g., those in an icon on the island of Skopelos and two large Akathistos icons in the Kremlin Museums of Moscow: the icon no. 1065 in the Uspenskij Sobor, called here the Uspenskij icon, and the icon no. 3039, called here the Kremlin icon.

I hope to make additional remarks also on the better-known Akathistos cycles and draw attention to the peculiarities of every cycle. An aspect, for instance, to which no sufficient attention has been paid until now is the evolution of the decoration of certain stanzas, from a simple visualisation of the text to a sophisticated, exegetical rendering of it. Mistakes of the artists will be also recorded, e.g., if they painted the correct scene for a specific stanza or if they have interchanged the pictures of two different stanzas. I shall also examine which part of the text of a stanza they decorated, e.g., if they illustrated the first part of a stanza or the second one, or even if they were inspired by the salutations of a stanza.

In the church of the St. Apostles in Kalamata, remnants of the second part of the Akathistos have been preserved in the barrel vault of the northern arm of the

¹ Gounaris, G., "Die Ikonographie des Akathistos-Hymnos in der nachbyzantinischen Ikonenmalerei," in *Byzantinische Malerei. Bildprogramme – Ikonographie – Stil, Symposium in Marburg vom 25.-29.6.1997*, edited by Guntram Koch, Wiesbaden, 2000, 79-90, esp. 80-81.

² For this church, see Panayotidi, Maria, "The Wall-Paintings in the Church of the Virgin Kosmosoteira at Ferai (Vira) and Stylistic Trends in 12th Century Painting," *Byzantinische Forschungen*, 14 (1989), 457-484.

church; they have been dated by Kalokyris to the end of the fourteenth century.¹ They are in a too bad state of preservation for iconographic observations. I know only of a drawing from the Akathistos in the church of St. Peter on the island Veliki Grad in the Prespa Lake, dated ca. 1360 A.D.² (Fig. 718). It shows a large depiction of the Prooemium and oikoi 10-12; the inscriptions are in Greek. I shall not examine the Post-byzantine Akathistos cycles, but I shall refer to them whenever necessary.³ The Akathistos in the Pantanassa church at Mistras, wrongly included by some scholars among the Byzantine cycles, is dated in the eighteenth century and, therefore, excluded from this study.

¹ Καλοκύρης, Κ., *Βυζαντινὰ ἐκκλησιαί τῆς ἱερᾶς Μητροπόλεως Μεσσηνίας*, Thessaloniki, 1973, 38-39, pl. 13b, mentioned that eight scenes in this church belong to the Akathistos cycle, of which oikoi 17-18 can be identified with certainty, although they are in a bad state of preservation; the remaining four scenes possibly decorate oikoi 13-16. See also Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 16, 89, 93, 95 and 99.

² Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 655, figs. 27 and 29, citing Knežević, B., "Crkva svetog Petra u Prespi," *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti, Matica srpska*, 2, (1966), 245-262, fig. 6, with a summary in French on pp. 263-265.

³ The Post-byzantine cycles have been mainly studied by Aspra Bardabake, M., *Οἱ μικρογραφίες τοῦ Ἀκαθίστου στὸν κώδικα Garrett 13*, Princeton, Athens, 1992, with a summary in English on pp. 153-158. This is the most thorough investigation, not only of the Post-byzantine but also of the Byzantine proper Akathistos cycles. For the Post-byzantine Akathistos icons, with remarks on the Byzantine ones, see Gounaris, *Akathistos*, 79-90.

THE AKATHISTOS IN WALL PAINTINGS

In Crete, full Akathistos cycles have been preserved in the churches of the Panagia and Soter in the village of Roustika, Rethymnon Province, and in the Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion Province. Incomplete cycles are found in the churches of the Panagia in the village of Meronas, Amari Province, the Hodegetria Monastery in Kainourgion Province, the Panagia in the village of Kavousi, Hierapetra Province, and the Panagia in the village of Vori, Pyrgiotissa Province. A short description of these churches, in which exceptional subjects in the wall paintings will be also mentioned, will precede the study of the various stanzas of the Akathistos.

Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon

The church of the Virgin and the Saviour in Roustika is a twin basilica, measuring approximately 9.50 x 7.50 m.¹ The northern nave of the church, dedicated to the Virgin, is the only one decorated with wall paintings. It is divided into three bays by two pointed transverse arches. The paintings are dated to 1390-1391 A.D. by means of a dedicatory inscription, written above a small window in the northern wall and below the last scenes of the Akathistos.²

The well-preserved Akathistos cycle covers the entire barrel-vault of the middle of the three bays of the church. Oikoi 1-12 are painted in the southern part of the barrel-vault and oikoi 13-24 in the northern one.³ The Akathistos cycle divides the Christological cycle into two parts, which are painted in the barrel-vaults of the eastern and the western bays of this church. The Nativity and the

Presentation of Christ in the Temple are missing from the Christological cycle, but this omission can be explained by the appearance of these scenes in the Akathistos cycle. The Baptism and the Transfiguration, which are also missing, do not, however, appear in the Akathistos cycle. Passion scenes and those of the Anastasis and later ones complete the Christological cycle. It is obvious that preference was given to them, above those of the earlier life of Christ.

As regards the other paintings in this church, worthy of mentioning are the following representations: the Departure of Abraham, a scene which precedes that of the Sacrifice of Abraham in the sanctuary,¹ and the Hand of God with Souls,² depicted at the summit of the western arch of the church; it is the second known representation of this type in Crete and one of the few appearing elsewhere; it is related to the Last Judgement, which is depicted on the western bay of this church.³

Of greater importance is, however, the appearance of a representation of the Throne of Mercy in the upper part of the triumphal arch of the sanctuary, which is a unique case in Byzantine art⁴ (Fig. 298). This Western *par excellence* iconographic type of the Holy Trinity substituted the Philoxenia of Abraham, a scene with which the Byzantines usually depicted the Holy Trinity. It shows God the Father seated on a wooden throne and holding the Crucified in his outstretched hands. Christ is shown in a smaller scale than the Father. The Holy Ghost, rendered as is usual in the form of a white dove, is painted between the Father's head and Christ. It is partially damaged, but one can distinguish the tail below the mouth of the Father and the red beak on the hair of Christ. Two angels

¹ Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 183, 186, 220, 222, 274, 344, fig. 256.

² The Hand of God is mentioned in *Wisdom*, 3:1, an apocryphal book of the Old Testament: *But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and the tortures of death shall not touch them*. On depictions of the Hand of God see Xyngopoulos, A., *Théssalonique et la peinture macédonienne*, Athens, 1955 (Amsterdam, 1980), 52-53, pl. 18.1-2: St. Apostles, Thessaloniki (ca. 1315 A.D.) and Manasija (1418 A.D.). Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 184, 197, 221, 223, 284, 321-322, fig. 262.

³ The other known representation of the Hand of God holding Souls in Crete appears in exactly the same place in the church of St. John the Baptist at Axos, Mylopotamos plovince, and was painted in approximately the same date as that in Roustika, i.e., ca. 1400 A.D. Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 136, 184, 197, 223, 284, 321, 325. For a list of paintings in this church see Gerola, Elenco, no. 297, and especially *Byzantinisches Kreta*, 347-348, 396, fig. 302 (head of St. Onouphrios). See also Gerola, *Monumenti Veneti*, II, 343, no. 31, and IV, 612. Bissinger, in *RbK*, IV, 1154, and *idem*, *Kreta*, 212, no. 194 (ca. 1410 A.D.), fig. 183 (colour illustration of St. John from the Deësis in the sanctuary).

⁴ On the iconography of the *Gnadenstuhl* see Braunfels, *Dreifaltigkeit*, p. xxxv-xliii. *Idem*, in *LCl*, 1, 525-537, s.v. *Dreifaltigkeit*. See also Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, II, 122. Neumann, S. *Der Gnadenstuhl*, Dissertation, Berlin, 1953. Hildburgh, W.L., "A Mediaeval bronze Pectoral Cross. Contributions to the study of the iconography of the Holy Trinity and of the Cross," *The Art Bulletin*, 14 (1932), 74 ff. Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 125, 179, 182, 184-185, 198-199, 202-206, 220-221, 271, 348, fig. 352.

¹ On this church see: Gerola, Elenco, no. 243. Antourakis, Roustika, 155-157. Antourakis, *Myriokephala*, 111. *Byzantinisches Kreta*, 261-63, fig. 70. Bissinger, M., in *RbK*, IV, 1145 (s.v. *Kreta*). Bissinger, *Kreta*, 189-190 no. 157, figs. 149-150, in colour. The church has been studied in detail by Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 179-224, *passim*, with bibliography, pls. 19-27 in colour, figs. 240-277. See also Spatharakis, *Crete*, no. 47, pp. 137-141, with bibliography, figs. 122-127, in colour.

² For the date 1391, instead of 1381, see: Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 179, 182, fig. 241.

³ For the Akathistos in Roustika, see Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 206-219, 313, pls. 21b-27b in colour, figs. 267, 269-277.

are depicted behind the throne and two more hold a red piece of drapery behind it. A partially preserved inscription labels the scene [H ΑΓΙΑ] ΤΡΙΑC (the Holy Trinity).¹

The first three oikoi of the Akathistos are devoted to the conversation between the Virgin and the archangel during the Annunciation and are always decorated with three Annunciation scenes. The first oikos, starting with the words "A leading angel was sent from heaven"² is here illustrated with the Annunciation at the Well (Figs. 1 and 362). The angel is depicted on the left side, striding towards the Virgin and raising his right hand in a gesture of speech. The Virgin is portrayed standing in an antithetical position: she turns her head in the direction of the Archangel and her body in the opposite one. She holds a rope in the left hand, which disappears into the well depicted next to her. Her gesture cannot be explained by the text, because she is not speaking in this stanza. It may be interpreted as a gesture of commotion at the appearance of the angel and his salutations, and by the text of Luke, 1:29, in which it is written that she was troubled at the salutation of Gabriel.³ An aedicula and a low wall are depicted in the background, suggesting that the scene takes place in a courtyard.

Oikos 2, in which the Virgin questions the words of the angel, is decorated with the Virgin sitting (Figs. 2 and 369). The figure of the Archangel Gabriel on the left is displayed in a similar, but not identical stance to that in the first oikos. The gesture of the Virgin and her bent head express her reservations to the words of the angel.

Oikos 3 portrays the Virgin making more expressive gestures in the direction of the Archangel than in the previous two scenes (Figs. 3 and 400). The angel also stretches out his hand more emphatically than in the previous oikoi. These vivid gestures are in accordance with the climax of the dialogue between them, reached in the third oikos; it ends with the salutations of Gabriel.

Oikos 4, referring to the Conception of Christ, is decorated with the Virgin sitting on a wooden throne (Figs. 4 and 418). She slightly raises her hands in a gesture, which here denotes that she accepts the will of God. She is flanked by two groups of maidens, holding up a red, embroidered veil behind her throne. The veil symbolises the Power of the All-highest that overshadowed the Virgin,

¹ For a more detailed description of this scene and a survey on the iconography of the Holy Trinity, see Spatarakis, *Rethymnon*, 184-185 and 198-206, pl. 19b, figs. 242, 337, 340-349 and 351-352, with bibliography.

² At the end of this book, the complete Greek text with the *chaitismoi* and an English translation are written. The Greek text is published, among others, by Trypanis, *Cantica*, 29-39. The English translation is based on Trypanis, C.A., *The Penguin Book of Greek Verse*, Harmondsworth 1971, 374-89. Although I cite the English translation of the Akathistos, my observations are naturally based on the Greek text.

³ Several oikoi of the first half of the Akathistos can be related to the text of Luke, 1:26 ff.

mentioned in the text of this oikos.¹ This scene belongs to an iconographic type that appears in Crete and elsewhere, especially invented in order to decorate the Conception of Christ in oikos 4 (Figs. 409-417). It substitutes the Annunciation of the Virgin, which is the current representation of the conception of Christ and which also decorates this stanza in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 279 and 402).

Oikos 5, lauding the meeting of the Virgin with Elisabeth, is illustrated with the Visitation scene, as one would expect.² The Virgin in a purple maphorion and Elisabeth in a light one embrace each other in front of an architectonic decoration with slender elements, which are characteristic for this church (Figs. 5 and 428). The Virgin is depicted slightly taller than Elisabeth, a usual phenomenon for this scene.

Oikos 6, in which the incredulity of Joseph is mentioned, is as expected decorated with the Doubts of Joseph, a scene borrowed from the Life of the Virgin.³ Joseph's stance and gestures suggest his doubts (Figs. 6 and 436). The Virgin is shown standing at the right with bending head and raised hands, an attitude with which her innocence is clearly expressed.

Oikos 7 narrates that the shepherds heard of the incarnation of Christ from the angels and run to adore him. The decoration of this oikos heavily depends on the iconography of the Nativity of Christ.⁴ The artist in Roustika, in an attempt to differentiate the Akathistos scene from the Nativity of the Christological cycle, added a singular detail in the lower left corner of the scene (Figs. 7 and 459). A nurse is depicted in a separate cave holding the Infant in her arms; she is clad in a red dress and is relatively larger in size than the nurses bathing the Child in other Nativity scenes; the Bathing of the Child is omitted here. The Child is exceptionally represented clothed with covered head, recalling the infant from the Birth of the Virgin. We also see a young shepherd above, blowing a large bagpipe, and a shepherd on the right with a *skiadion*, a shade hat, making an expressive gesture; they visualise the last words of this oikos, in which it is mentioned that the shepherds praised the Virgin with the *chaitismoi* which follow this oikos. The remaining elements of the scene do not deviate from the customary Nativity scenes. The Virgin reclines diagonally on her mattress and

¹ For the symbolism of the veil in Late antiquity and Byzantium, in imperial and church ceremonies, see: Grabar, A., "L'iconographie de la Parousie," *Lex Orandi*, Paris, 1966, reprinted in *Idem, L'art de la fin de l'antiquité et du moyen-âge*, I, 569-582, esp. 577. Lafontaine-Dosogne, Akathiste, 674-677. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 143-144. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 50 ff, note 125. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 77-87.

² Luke, 1:39-56. *Protoevangelion*, XII, 2-3. On the iconography of the Visitation see Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, I, 65-67. Lechner, M., in *LCl*, 2, 229-235, s.v. *Heimsuchung Mariens*. Wessel, K., in *RbK*, II, 1093-1099, s.v. *Heimsuchung*. On the decoration of oikos 5 see: Lafontaine-Dosogne, Akathiste, 677. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 19-20. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 54-55.

³ Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Life of the Virgin*, 190-191.

⁴ Lafontaine-Dosogne, Akathiste, 679-681. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 20-21.

looks downward in the direction of the nurse with the Infant. Joseph is shown seated in his traditional pensive pose in the lower part of the scene. The two angels in the upper part of the scene should play a more important role in the scene, as the text of this oikos requires. In the upper part of the scene, a golden star is depicted within a segment, from which three beams of light descend.

Oikoi 8-10 have been devoted to the story of the three Magi and are decorated with three scenes.¹ Oikos 8 is illustrated with the Journey of the Magi² (Figs. 8 and 472). The three Magi are shown in three different ages on horseback in front of a mountainous landscape. The middle one holds a staff. The figure of a half angel shows the way to the Magi, which is a very rare iconographic detail for this scene. It appears again only in Meronas (Figs. 29 and 473). The star is also added to the scene, painted in a segment with three beams of light in the upper right corner. The artists of Dečani, Marko and the Serbian Psalter went a step further in depicting an archangel on horseback leading the way (Figs. 91, 118 and 223).

Oikos 9 is decorated with the Adoration of the Magi. The Virgin is almost frontally depicted on a wooden throne (Figs. 9 and 485). She holds the Child in her hands, as mentioned in the text. The three Magi approach her in a stance of humbleness, slightly bending forward and offering their gifts. The background consists of an architectonic setting.

Oikos 10 is decorated with the Return of the Magi to Babylon. The scene in Roustika, the lower part of which is damaged, exhibits the Magi on horseback approaching the fortified city of Babylon (Figs. 10 and 503). Their gestures may be interpreted by the text, which describes them as heralds of Christ, but are actually copied from representations depicting the Journey of the Magi, in which they point to the star leading the way. The personification of the city of Babylon appears at the gate and welcomes them. She is clad in eastern garments and has one breast uncovered, which is an unusual iconographic feature.³ It is

¹ The story of the Magi with three or more scenes appears in manuscripts from the eleventh century, e.g. Par. gr. 74, Laurent. VI, 23, Vat. gr. 1156 and Jerusalem, Taphou 14. They are listed by Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 59, note 211. See also Lafontaine-Dosogne, J., "L'illustration du cycle des mages suivant l'Homélie sur la Nativité attribuée à Jean Damascène," *Le Muséon*, 100 (1987), 211-224.

² Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 212, pl. 23a. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 681-683, esp. 682, figs. 40 and 43. She could not see that in Roustika also the star is present. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 61, note 221. On this oikos see also Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 22-23.

³ A similar personification, with the upper part of her garment open, by which her ascetic breast is revealed, is seen in the Flight into Egypt depicted, e.g., in the church of St. John St. the Evangelist at Spilios, outside the village of Kalogerou, Amari, dated 1347 A.D. (Spatharakis I. and Klinkenberg, E., "The Pictorial cycle of the Life of St. John the Evangelist in Crete," *BZ*, 89 (1996), 420-440, esp. 425), and in the church of St. George, outside the village of Agios

interesting to note that the personification of Babylon has been preserved only in the Cretan churches, beside Roustika, in Valsamonero and the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 46, 63 and 501).

Oikos 11, describing the visit of the Virgin with the Child to Egypt, is embellished with the Flight into Egypt, as one would expect.¹ The scene, the lower part of which is damaged, belongs to the iconographic type that shows Joseph carrying the Child on his shoulders (Figs. 11 and 515). The Virgin leads the group on a pack animal and points to a fortified city, at the entrance of which the personification of Egypt is depicted; the latter is clad in eastern garments with a turban on her head, similar to those seen in the previous scene. No falling idols are visible on the top of the city, although they are explicitly mentioned in the text of this oikos. One of the sons of Joseph, habitually identified as James, follows behind Joseph. The iconographic type of the Flight into Egypt, representing Joseph carrying on his shoulders the Child, emphasises the triumphal character of the scene; an intimate family sense is, however, given to it rather than a triumphal one: the Virgin turns her head in the direction of Joseph carrying the Child on his shoulders, who follows, instead of leading, the group.

Oikos 12, lauding the recognition of the Child as God by Simeon, is naturally illustrated with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.² The scene, the lower part of which is damaged, reveals Simeon as a huge figure holding the small figure of Christ close to his face (Figs. 12 and 532). The Virgin and Joseph, holding two turtledoves, are painted in a smaller scale. The figure of the Prophetess Anna is missing here, probably because of lack of space. This iconographic type fits better the text of the *Akathistos*, in which we read *you were given to him (Simeon) as an infant*, than that which shows the Virgin holding the Child.

Oikos 13, exalting Christ as the New Creation, is decorated with the Virgin sitting on a backless wooden throne and holding the Child in front of her³ (Figs. 13 and 548). Two groups of monks, clad in habits of various colours, flank the Virgin. The first monk on the left is clad in the great attire, with a black

Konstantinos (Artos), Rethymnon, executed in 1401 A.D.: Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 53-54, fig. 35.

¹ On the iconography of the Flight into Egypt see: Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, I, 127-135. *LCI*, 2, 43-51. Réau, 2, 273-288. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Infancy*, 226-229. For this oikos, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 687-689. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 26-28. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 147-149. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 68-71.

² Luke, 2:22-39. On the iconography of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple see: Shorr, *Presentation in the Temple*, 17-32. Wessel, K., in *RbK*, I, 1134-1145, s.v. *Darstellung Christi im Tempel*. Lucchesi Palli, E., in *LCI*, 1, 473-477. Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, I, 100-104, s.v. *Darbringung Jesu im Tempel*. Maguire, *Iconography of Simeon*, 261-269. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 84-90. Mouriki, *Nea Moni*, I, 132-134.

³ Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 214, fig. 272.

koukoulion and the *analabos*,¹ he may be identified as St. Anthony. Above the head of the Virgin, three rays descend from a segment, a motif that is often found in Roustika.

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, is rendered with Christ Emmanuel surrounded by angels (Figs. 14 and 596). This picture, however, illustrates better oikos 16, in which the angels are explicitly mentioned; it also decorates oikos 16 in many other Akathistos cycles (Figs. 592-603). This means that these two oikoi have been interchanged in Roustika. The picture for oikos 16, which should decorate oikos 14, shows the half-figure of Christ placed in a large octagonal star, painted in the upper part of the scene (Figs. 16 and 571). We see several heads of angels behind Christ; the head of an ox appears from behind the left corner of the star, which is the only symbol left over from the four ones decorating the archetype of this picture.² Monks and bishops raise their hands in veneration at the lower part of the scene. A crown appears above the heads of the group on the left, obviously belonging to a crowned figure, which, however, cannot be identified. The star with Christ in it is meant to represent the heaven to which one should turn his thoughts, and the heights to which Christ wants to draw the believers, as mentioned in the text of oikos 14. A similar division of the scene into two parts is also seen in the other Cretan churches and in Ochrid (Figs. 569-572). The closest parallel to Roustika is found in the Hodegetria Monastery (Fig. 56).

Oikos 15, alluding to the Double Nature of Christ, is represented by painting the figure of Christ twice: once on the earth and again in heaven.³ Christ is frontally depicted standing in a mandorla and flanked by two groups of men (Figs. 15 and 575). The first figure on the left can be identified as St. Peter and the men behind him consequently as Apostles. In a segment painted in the upper part of the scene, which suggests the heaven, Christ is again represented, this time as a half-figure flanked by six angels. Most of the cycles elsewhere are also decorated in a similar manner, showing the figure of Christ twice (Figs. 574-585).

Oikos 16, mentioning that the angels were astounded at the incarnation of Christ, has been interchanged with oikos 14, as already noted above in examining oikos 14. The latter is decorated with the figure of Christ Emmanuel

¹ On the costume of the monks see Müsseler, P., in *LCI*, 5, 260-265, s.v. *Asketen heilige*, with bibliography. The *analabos* symbolises Christ carrying the cross: Brightman, F.E., "The *Historia Mystagogica* and other Greek Commentaries on the Byzantine Liturgy," *Journal of Theological Studies*, 9 (1908), 248-267, esp. 263, 11-14.

² The *Hermeneia*, 149, also mentions the symbols of the Evangelists in the four parts of the cloud on which Christ is depicted, but for oikos 13, as already mentioned. Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

³ On the decoration of this oikos, see among others: Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 32-33. Aspra Bardabake, 78-81.

sitting on a wooden, backless throne and raising his right hand¹ (Figs. 14 and 596). Angels, explicitly mentioned at the beginning of oikos 16, surround the throne and venerate Christ Emmanuel. A seraph in red is painted in front of his suppedion; seraphs often denote that a scene takes place in heaven.

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, shows the Virgin with the Child enthroned and flanked by two groups of men (Figs. 17 and 606). The Child almost disappears in the garments of the Virgin and behind her right hand. The Virgin indicates with the other hand a group of men standing on the left, to which she also turns her head. The men are clad in long robes and wear *skaranika*, beehive shaped bonnets of various colours; they are meant to represent the 'voiceless' orators mentioned in the text of this stanza. A similar group is depicted on the other side of the Virgin. The first man of each group holds an open book. The men gesture while looking at each other, by which the artist visualised their astonishment at the miraculous birth of Christ, alluded to in the text of this oikos. The costume worn by the orators is identical to that worn by the cantors in oikos 23 (Fig. 23).

Oikos 18, referring to the Salvation of the World, is decorated with a variant of the Descent of Christ into Hell, the Anastasis.² Christ is depicted pulling Adam out of his sarcophagus, while turning his head in the direction of a group of angels (Figs. 18 and 630). The crowns of David and Solomon appear behind Adam. The wish of God to save the world, mentioned in the first part of the text of this oikos, is, thus, visualised with the descent of Christ into hell and the resurrection of Adam, the forefather of mankind. A possible explanation of Christ's turning in the direction of the angels is that he wants to deliver Adam (and the righteous who have been saved) to the angels in Paradise. In the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus (or Acts of Pilate, II), describing the Descent of Christ into Hell, we read in chapter IX (XXV) that Christ delivered Adam and all the righteous to the Archangel Michael in Paradise.³ A similar iconography for this stanza is seen in the partially preserved scenes in Meronas, Vori and Ochrid, and in the better one in Valsamonero (Figs. 54 and 628-629).

¹ Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 215, fig. 273.

² For the iconography of the Anastasis, see Weitzmann, *Evangelion*, 83-98, reprinted in *idem*, *Psalters and Gospels*, essay no. XI. Xyngopoulos, *Kathodos*, 113 ff. Weitzmann, *Aristocratic*, 98-102, reprinted in *idem*, *Psalters and Gospels*, essay no. VI. Lucchesi Palli, E., in *RbK*, I, 142-148, s.v. Anastasis. *Eadem*, in *LCI*, 2, 322-331, s.v. *Höllenfahrt Christi*. Lange, *Auferstehung*. Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, III, 41-66. Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, 125-126. Schwartz, *Anastasis*, 29-34. Kartsonis, *Anastasis*. Plank, *Adam*, 34-49.

³ Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 90-94, esp. 91-93, although cited the relevant passage from the Gospel of Nicodemus, she considered the figures of the angels as merely accompanying Christ; this interpretation, however, does not explain why Christ emphatically turns to them; neither does her, actually irrelevant, 'typological' comparison to Christ ascending Tabor in the Transfiguration scene in codex Panteleimon 2, fol. 252ro, on the Mount Athos.

Oikos 19, the Defence of Virgins, displays the Virgin *Hodegetria* standing on a pedestal and flanked by a group of bishops on the right and a group of female saints on the left (Figs. 19 and 643). The first female saint is clad in a dark blue *maphorion* and may be identified as St. Paraskevi. The saint between her and the Virgin is clad in red and may be identified as St. Marina, and the two saints behind, wearing a crown, as St. Catherine and St. Irene.¹ Women usually flank the Virgin in other cycle, but men may also appear among them, as the bishops in Roustika; they belong to *all those who run to you for protection*, mentioned in the text of this oikos, and to the men whom Christ taught to address the Virgin with the words of the *cheiretismoi* of this oikos. A similar iconography appears in Valsamonero (Figs. 55 and 644).

Oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, is illustrated with a symmetrical composition (Figs. 20 and 645). In the upper half of the scene, Christ is represented enthroned in a mandorla, which is surrounded by angels. Two groups of bishops venerate Christ in the lower half of the scene. They represent those who declare that their odes cannot be compared to what Christ has offered to mankind, and sing *Alleluia*.

Oikos 21, in which the Virgin is compared to a lamp full of light, shows her standing in a frontal attitude and holding the Child in front of her chest (Figs. 21 and 671). She is surrounded by an elongated mandorla in red, from which triple beams extend. Adam and Eve are depicted kneeling in front of a group of men in a cave, painted in the lower right corner of the scene. The background consists of two rocky hills flanking the Virgin. This picture clearly visualises the incorporeal flame of the text (Christ), with which the Virgin, as a lamp full of light, illuminates those in darkness. A similar but not identical scene for this oikos is found in Ochrid (Fig. 670).

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, reveals a symmetrical arrangement (Figs. 22 and 681). Christ is depicted standing in the middle and holding a scroll, which he tears in two pieces. The beginning of this oikos is exceptionally written on the scroll, while in the other pictures it is written at the top of the scene. The scroll resembles at first glance two stone tables, but is actually meant to be from parchment, the *cheirophon* mentioned in the text. Christ is flanked by two groups of men, kneeling in proskynesis; the first man on the left has the facial features of St. Peter. The background consists of a boll drapery above the head of Christ, which connects two architectonic elements positioned on a wall. The decoration of this oikos in Ochrid, Meronas and Valsamonero belongs to the same iconographic type (Figs. 58, 679-680 and 682).

¹ This identification may be verified with the aid of the female saints painted in Valsamonero, as we shall see below.

This is a new iconography for Christ, which has been invented for this oikos and appears in a few more cycles of the Akathistos (Figs. 674 and 676-678). It is clearly inspired by the last verse of the text, in which Christ tears up the book (*cheirophon*) with the old debts of mankind. The *cheirophon* in the text of this oikos has been associated with that mentioned in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians,¹ as well as with liturgical and hymnological texts, among which those by Romanos the Melodos.² St. John Chrysostom identified the *cheirophon* referred to by St. Paul as, among other things, the *cheirophon* (the 'contract') that God drew up with Adam: *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die* (Genesis, 2:17); this *cheirophon* was in the possession of the devil.³

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth,⁴ is painted with the Virgin sitting on a high throne and holding the Child on her knee with her right hand (Figs. 23 and 690). With the other hand, she holds the wrist of a man, which is an unusual detail for the decoration of this oikos. The man is the leading figure of a group of men meant to represent cantors, alluded to in the first word of this oikos. He is clad in a purple robe, wears a *skaranikon*, a beehive shaped hat, and holds a book.⁵ Similar costumes wear the figures behind him. Two bishops lead the other group, standing on the left; the first one holds a book and a censer. One of the figures in this group wears a headgear, which is severely damaged; the lower part of it reveals a similar decoration to that seen in the figures of the group on the right, suggesting that he is also a cantor. The costume worn by the cantors is identical to that worn by the orators in oikos 17, as already mentioned in examining this oikos (Fig. 17). The bishops are inspired by the sixth salutation of this oikos, in which the Virgin is greeted as *holy exaltation of dutiful priests*. An almost identical iconography for this stanza is seen in Meronas, Valsamonero, Vori and Ochrid (Figs. 689 and 691-693).

In Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, the last one of the Akathistos, the believers offer the hymn to the Virgin for the salvation of their soul. The Virgin is shown sitting on a wooden throne and holding Christ on her lap (Figs. 24 and 701). Angels, four of whom offer her open scrolls with unidentifiable text,

¹ 2:14: *Blotting out the handwriting (cheirophon) of ordinance that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.*

² Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 104-105, with the relevant passages. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 53.

³ St. John Chrysostom, *In epistolam ad Colossenses*, PG, 62, 340-341.

⁴ The scene of this oikos is often wrongly labelled *Living Temple*, although it usually shows cantors praising the Virgin.

⁵ Maderakis, *Themata*, 93-94, figs. 39-40, thinks that this figure may represent the painter of the church.

supposedly the Akathistos text, surround her. A similar iconography can be discerned in the badly preserved scene in Meronas. This type of decorating stanza 24 is unique among Byzantine cycles.¹ In most of the cycles the hymn is understood as a chant and rendered by various people 'singing' it.

Panagia, Meronas, Amari

The church of the Panagia in Meronas, Amari Province, is a three-nave basilica with an almost square ground plan, measuring 10,70 x 10,34 m.² The lateral aisles are separated from the central nave by three pointed arches, resting on pillars. The church originally had two naves, to which the southern aisle was added at later date; parts of the southern wall of what is now the middle nave were demolished to connect it to the later aisle. The church has now three entrances: An original one on the northern wall and two on the southern wall, where also a belfry is built. The year 1838 is carved on the eastern entrance of the southern wall and the year 1860 on the belfry. The western entrance on this wall is older; two coats of arms of the Kallergis family,³ consisting of diagonal bands, flank a rosette on the lintel of this entrance. It is also decorated with pointed arches under Venetian influence, which is also visible in other architectonic parts of the exterior of this church, e.g. in the three apses and on the western wall. The most northern of the three round windows on the western wall has also a coat of arms of the Kallergis family.

More important for the wall paintings of this church are two painted coats of arms of the Kallergis family in the interior. They are bendy of six, azure and argent.⁴ They appear below the western transverse arch of the middle ship, on

¹ This iconography for stanza 24 also appears in the Post-byzantine Akathistos manuscript Garrett 13 in Princeton: Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 35, 113-116, figs. 25 in colour and 59. She explained the appearance of the angels by the *Theotokion* sung in the liturgy of the Akathistos and by other Mariological texts (pp. 115 and 139).

² On this church see: Gerola, *Monumenti Veneti*, 475 no. 4. Gerola, Elenco, 139-216 (Lassithiotakis, no. 356). Μπορμπουδάκης, Μ., "Οι τοιχογραφίες της Παναγίας του Μέρωνα και μία συγκεκριμένη τάση της Κρητικής ζωγραφικής," *Πεπραγμένα του Ε' Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου* (Hagios Nikolaos, 1981), Vol. II, Herakleion, 1986, II, 396-412. Gallas, K., Wessel, K., Borboudakis, M., *Byzantinisches Kreta* (Studium und Reise), München, 1983, 121, 123-25, 262, 280, 297, fig. 237, with a date between 1339-1341 A.D. Bissinger, M., in *RBK*, IV, 1141-1142, with a date ca. 1380 A.D. Bissinger, *Kreta*, 199-200, no. 175, figs. 164-165 in colour, with a date ca. 1390 A.D. Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, see index on p.356.

³ The most important member of this family was Alexios (d. 1321), because of his revolt against the Venetians, who ruled on Crete between 1210-1669 A.D., and especially his treaty with them in 1299 A.D. The text of the *Pax Alexii Callergi* is published, among others by K.D. Mertziotis in *Kretika Chronika*, 3 (1949), 262-292, esp. 264-275 (the bilingual text). For the most important items from this treaty, see, Detorakis, *History of Crete*, 161-163.

⁴ Three blue and three white diagonal bands from upper left to lower right.

which the Ten Martyrs of Crete are painted. The coat of arms on the southern wall is painted below St. Gelasios (Fig. 725). Remnants of an inscription have been preserved in the south-western corner of this nave (Fig. 726). The largest part of it was destroyed when the middle nave was connected with an arch to the southern aisle, as already mentioned. Among the words which can be reconstructed or read with certainty are, ΔΙΑ ΚΙΝ[ΔΡΟΜΗC] (with the contribution) in the third line, and ΚΙΜΒΙΧ [ΑΥΤΩ] (of his wife) in the fifth line. These are words which appear in dedicatory inscriptions, but unfortunately no name or date can be distinguished here. The paintings of this church must be, therefore, dated on stylistic evidence. The closest dated paintings are seen in the church of St. George in the village of Agios Konstantinos (Artos) of the Rethymnon Province, painted in 1401 A.D.¹ For establishing the sponsor of the paintings of the church the following information is of importance: A monk told the Florentine priest Cristoforo Buondelmonti, who travelled in Crete in 1415 A.D., that the oldest Kallergis lives in Meronas; the exiles seek shelter here and are led to Matthew Kallergis, who treats them very well.² The coats of arms in this church, the date ascribed to the paintings and the information by Buondelmonti, lead to the conclusion that the family of Matthew Kallergis sponsored the paintings of this church.

Worthy of mentioning scenes in this church, beside the usual ones and the Akathistos cycle, are a cycle of the Life of the Virgin consisting of nine scenes and of St. George, a Melismos, a large Tree of Jesse, including ancient philosophers, on the western wall of the middle ship, the Parable of the Ten Virgins, the Vision of , and the Twelve-year-old Christ teaching in the temple. I reproduce the Enrolment for Taxation from the Life of the Virgin, which is one of the few scenes of this subject preserved in the Byzantine realm³ (Fig. 724). The Virgin and Joseph approach a clerk with peculiar red headgear writing on a scroll, who stands in front of the enthroned governor of Syria Cyrenius, clad in

¹ For this church, see: Gerola, Elenco, 242. Gerola, *Monumenti Veneti*, IV, 474, no. 2. Drandakis, Artos, 65-161, esp. 66-67 the inscription, with slight variations of minor importance in comparison to the transcription by Gerola. *Byzantinisches Kreta*, 123. Borboudakis, M., in *AD*, 25 (1970), Chronika, 490, on reinforcing works on the church. Borboudakis, Meronas, 397. Bissinger, in *RBK*, IV, 1147 f. Bissinger, *Kreta*, 193-194, no. 164, figs. 155-156, N. part of the Ascension and the Baptism in colour. Spatharakis, Rethymnon, 47-71, passim, Pls. 4b-6a in colour and figs. 21-54. Spatharakis, *Crete*, 153-156 no. 53, figs. 135-137.

² Cristoforo Buondelmonti, *Descriptio insulae Crete et libri insularum, Cap. XI: Crete*, édition critique par M.-A. Spitaël, Herakleion, 1981, 186 vv. 1032 and 1036, with a translation in French, and p. 291. For a translation in Modern Greek, see *Ένας γύρος της Κρήτης στα 1415. Χριστοφόρου Μπουοντελμόντι περιγραφή της νήσου Κρήτης*, Μετάφραση και εισαγωγή Μ. Αποσκίτη, πρόλογος Στ. Αλεξίου, Herakleion, 1983, 77.

³ The story is inspired by the Gospel of Luke, 2:1-5 and the Protoevangelium, 17:1 (Elliott, *Apocryphal N.T.*, 63). For the iconography of the Enrolment for Taxation, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Infancy of Christ*, 206-207.

Byzantine imperial attire; seven soldiers complete the scene. The scene is inscribed with the text of Luke, 2:4: ANEBI ΔΕ ΚΑΙ ΙΩΧΦ

The Akathistos cycle is painted in the northern nave. This nave is covered by a half barrel-vault, a little larger than 90°. ¹ The Akathistos begins in the tympanum of the western wall and continues in the half barrel-vault and in the upper part of the southern wall, i.e., above the arcade that connects this nave to the main nave of the church (Fig. 303). The scenes on the southern wall read from West to East, while those in the half barrel-vault are irregularly arranged. The oikoi have survived in various states of preservation, which is usually bad. The first oikos is painted on the western wall; the Virgin of the Annunciation is separated from the Archangel by an original window (Fig. 25). Oikoi 2-7 are shown in the barrel-vault of the western bay. The two Annunciation scenes are displayed in the upper part (oikoi 2 and 3), while the Conception and the Visitation are painted below them (oikoi 4 and 5). The lower zone shows the Doubts of Joseph (oikos 6) and the Nativity, of which only the upper part of the scene is preserved (oikos 7). The cycle continues with six scenes in the upper part of the opposite southern wall (oikoi 8-13). The Journey of the Magi (oikos 8) is shown in the western bay, but from the Adoration of the Magi (oikos 9), once painted to the East of oikos 8, only the upper right corner is preserved. The Return of the Magi to Babylon and the Flight into Egypt (oikoi 10 and 11) are partially preserved in the middle bay. The Presentation of Christ in the Temple and the New Creation (oikoi 12 and 13) are painted in the eastern bay of the naos; oikos 13 is partially damaged. The cycle continues in the barrel-vault of the middle bay and ends in the eastern bay of the naos, before the sanctuary. The oikoi read in each bay from East to West and from the lower to the upper part of it. The middle bay contains six scenes and the eastern one five. The lower zone of the middle bay is covered by a scene with the text of oikos 14 (the Strange Birth), but the scene represented here belongs to oikos 16 (Astounded Angels). The Double Nature of Christ (oikos 15) is painted to the West of it. The middle zone of this bay is painted with oikos 16 (Astounded Angels), but the scene decorating this oikos is interchanged with that illustrating oikos 14. The Voiceless Orators, decorating oikos 17, are painted next to the previous oikos. The upper zone of this bay is painted with the Salvation of the World (oikos 18), but this scene is badly damaged. Only a few remnants are preserved from the next scene, the Defence of Virgins (oikos 19). The lower zone of the eastern bay shows the to the right (oikos 20) and the Virgin as a Lamp shining to those in darkness to the left (oikos 21); the latter scene is in a worse state of preservation than the former one, while the lower part of both scenes is damaged due to the opening of a later

¹ The shape of this barrel-vault can be seen in Fig. 25.

window below them. The middle zone of this bay is decorated with the Cancellation of the Old Debts to the right (oikos 22) and the Virgin as a Living Temple to the left (oikos 23). The Offering of the Hymn (oikos 24) covers the entire upper zone of this bay, but it is badly preserved.¹

Oikos 1 is decorated with the Annunciation at the Well (Figs. 25 and 360). The attitudes of Gabriel and the Virgin are identical to those seen in Roustika (Figs. 1 and 362), but they are more vivid and naturalistic, in other words, of a better artistic quality than those in Roustika. The peculiar architectonic construction on the low wall in the background differs. The well is better visible in Meronas, because the artist had more space. Three beams of light descend from a segment painted to the left of the Virgin's head, apparently a symbol of the Holy Trinity.

Oikos 2 shows the angel approaching the Virgin sitting on a wooden throne (Fig. 26). The two figures in Meronas are again almost identical to those in Roustika (Fig. 2). The Archangel shows more motion and the gestures of the Virgin are more vivid than those in Roustika. The architectonic setting in the background differs.

Oikos 3 is partially damaged (Fig. 393). The Archangel Gabriel extends his hand more emphatically than in Roustika, but the upper part of the body of the Virgin, the inclination of her head and her gestures are almost identical to those in Roustika (Fig. 3).

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, is illustrated, like in Roustika and elsewhere, with the new iconographic type invented for this scene (Fig. 28). The Virgin is shown sitting on a throne and two maidens hold the veil spread behind her throne, which is green on the inner side and red on the outer one. In Roustika more maidens are depicted, squeezed behind the throne.

Oikos 5, the Visitation, is partially damaged, but what is preserved, mainly the figure of the Virgin, displays an identical iconography to that seen in Roustika (Fig. 5). The similarities extend to the position of the hands and the draperies, but the halo of the Virgin is red. The closest iconographic parallel outside Crete is found in Ochrid (Figs. 329 and 429).

Oikos 6, the Doubts of Joseph, is also partially damaged, but what is visible reveals again that the attitude of the figures and the arrangement of the draperies are very similar to those seen in Roustika (Fig. 6).

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is badly damaged. Only a narrow zone has been preserved in the upper part of the scene, which is not sufficient for iconographical observations.

Oikos 8, the Journey of the Magi, is partially preserved (Figs. 29 and 473). The third Magus is damaged, but the other two reveal that they travel on

¹ In *Byzantinisches Kreta*, 280, oikos Omega (24) is placed by error on the W. wall.

horseback and hold their precious gifts in their hand. The scene does not look at first glance similar to that in Roustika (Figs. 8 and 472), but a better observation reveals that it is a reversed copy of it: The first Magus raises his hand and the second, an elderly one, turns his body in the direction of the third Magus. This and other scenes in Meronas are broader, while those in Roustika are higher, as a result of which more space is given to the middle Magus in length. On the other hand, there is no height in the picture, and therefore no mountains have been painted above the Magi; moreover, the flying angel leading the way has been shifted to the corner, again because of lack of space in height. More striking is, however, the archangel on horseback pointing to the star, depicted in Dečani, Marko and the Serbian Psalter, as already noticed in examining this scene in Roustika (Figs. 91, 118 and 223).

Oikos 9, the Adoration of the Magi, is totally lost, except for the upper right corner of the scene, which is not sufficient for any observations.

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, is incompletely preserved and in a bad state of preservation. Only the right part of it is visible, which shows the three Magi on horseback. The first Magus is only half visible, while the city of Babylon is missing. It is painted in reverse, compared to that in Roustika (Fig. 10).

Oikos 11, the Flight into Egypt, is too badly preserved to be reproduced. One can, however, distinguish that it belongs to the iconographic type showing Joseph carrying the Child on his shoulders. He follows the Virgin who turns her head in his direction. James leads the group, which is also seen in Valsamonero and other cycles (Figs. 47, 140, 519-521). The 'city' of Egypt is not visible.

Oikos 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, is badly preserved, but one can discern that it is Simeon who holds the Child (Fig. 534). The Prophetess Anna is depicted behind Joseph, an infrequent position for this figure. The altar of the temple is also visible in the background. The iconography is similar to that seen in Valsamonero (Figs. 48 and 533).

Oikos 13, the New Creation, is partially damaged. One can, however, distinguish that it has a similar but not identical iconography to that in Roustika (Fig. 13). The Virgin with the Child is sitting frontally on a throne and is flanked by two groups of men. That on the right represents monks and that on the left bishops.

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, is decorated, like in Roustika, with the picture that belongs to oikos 16 (Figs. 596-597). The decoration of oikos 16 in Meronas, which should decorate oikos 14, is badly damaged. It can be reconstructed from what is still visible and the picture seen in Valsamonero rather (Fig. 49) than in Roustika (Fig. 16). It is divided into two parts. Christ is depicted in bust form in the middle of the upper part of the scene. He is flanked by female figures on the left, among which the Virgin, and at least one figure on the right; this figure may

be identified as St. John the Baptist, to judge from the corresponding figure in Valsamonero. The lower part of the scene reveals remnants of various figures, among which bishops and monks.

Oikos 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is partially preserved, but the remnants reveal that it is very similar to that seen in Roustika (Fig. 15). Christ is shown standing, but not in a mandorla as in Roustika, and flanked by two groups of men; the first figure on the left can be identified as St. Peter, like in Roustika. A similar representation is also painted in the upper part of the scene, but four instead of six angels flank the bust of Christ, actually a minor detail.

Oikos 16, the Astounded Angels, is decorated, like in Roustika, with the picture of oikos 14. This picture, which should have been painted here, shows a similar iconography to that seen in Roustika (Figs. 14 and 596-597). Christ Emmanuel is depicted on a throne, surrounded by angels venerating him. Two seraphs in red flank the head of Christ, whereas in Roustika one seraph is painted below his feet.

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, is badly damaged, but one may discern that the composition is similar to that in Roustika (Fig. 17).

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, is partially damaged, but the remnants preserved suggest that it is decorated with an Anastasis scene, very similar to that seen in Roustika (Fig. 18).

Oikos 19, the Defence of Virgins, is almost totally lost. In the lower left corner, the lower part of a white garment can be seen, which corresponds to that of the bishop in Roustika (Fig. 19).

Oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, is too badly preserved to be reproduced. One can distinguish that Christ is represented enthroned in a mandorla, held by four angels. He turns and blesses in the direction of a group of bishops, depicted on the left at a slightly lower level. Compared to Roustika, the arrangement of the figures in Meronas is not symmetrical and the scene is not clearly divided in two halves, because the scene is broader than higher, whereas the opposite is the case in Roustika (Fig. 20).

Oikos 21, the Shining Lamp, is badly preserved, but one may discern that the scene is similar to that in Roustika (Fig. 21). The Virgin with the Child is painted in a red mandorla to the left of a hill, in the lower part of which a few figures can be distinguished, representing those in darkness, just as in Roustika.

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is also in a bad state of preservation (Fig. 682). There are, however, sufficient remnants to help one to establish that the iconography applied here is similar, but not identical, to that seen in Roustika and Valsamonero (Figs. 22, 58 and 680-681).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is badly preserved (Fig. 693). One may, however, discern, also with the aid of the better preserved corresponding scene in Roustika (Figs. 23 and 690), that the Virgin with the Child is shown frontally

sitting on a throne. She is flanked by two groups of men. That on the left, which is a little better preserved, shows a bishop and men wearing *skaranka* hats of various colours. They represent cantors.

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is twice larger than the previous scenes, but unfortunately badly damaged. One can, however, distinguish the Virgin enthroned in the middle with the Child frontally seated on her lap. Angels surround her; a few of them hold open scrolls, as in Roustika (Fig. 24).

Monastery of St. Phanourios, Valsamonero, Kainourgion

A complete cycle of the Akathistos is also painted in the Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside of the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion Province.¹ The church has two naves. The northern and largest nave, covered with a barrel vault, is dedicated to the Virgin and the southern, covered with a half barrel vault, is dedicated to St. John the Baptist. This kind of construction is already seen in the church of the Panagia in Meronas, the two naves of which are also covered with similar barrel vaults. The church has also an esonarthex, dedicated to St. Phanourios, and an exonarthex of a later date. All parts are decorated with wall paintings; those in the exonarthex are in a bad state of preservation. There are several inscriptions with dates in various places of the church from the beginning of the fifteenth century. One of them, dated 1431 A.D., states that Konstantinos Eirikos painted only the nave of St. Phanourios, which was built in 1426, and that *all the divine churches*, by which the various parts of this church are most probably meant, were sponsored by the *hieromonachos* Ionas Palamas.²

There is a far too large number of scenes beside the Akathistos cycle in this church to be described here.³ One may, however, refer to an extensive cycle of the Life of St. John the Baptist in the barrel-vault of the southern nave,⁴ and of

¹ On this church see: Gerola, Elenco, no. 590. *Idem*, *Monumenti Veneti*, II, 309 and IV, 539-541 nos. 1-4. Kalokyris, *Krete*, 97. Chatzidakis, *Krete*, 73-75. Kalokyris, *Crete*, fig. BW 45. *Archaiologikon Deltion*, 30 (1975), Chronika, 357. *Byzantinisches Kreta*, 62, 118, 126-127, 139, 143, 262, 280, 313-321, 394, 397, 410, figs. 95, 110-111, 275-281. Bissinger, in *RbK*, IV, 948f, 1141-1142, 1158. Bissinger, *Kreta*, nos. 90, 150 and 207, figs. 3, 88-89, 143-144 and 192, in colour. Spatharakis, *Agia Trias*, 289-291, figs. 13 and 15-16. Spatharakis, *Great Entrance*, 332-335. Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 31, 33-35, 40, 205, 208, 215-217, 219, 280, 330, fig. 352. The inscriptions from the monastery have been published by Xanthoudidis, *Epigraphai*, 139, and Gerola, *Monumenti Veneti*, IV, 539-541, nos. 1-4, fig. 539.

² Xanthoudidis, *Epigraphai*, 139, and Gerola, *Monumenti*, IV, 539 no. 1, fig. 539.

³ They are listed in *Byzantinisches Kreta*, 313-321.

⁴ Κατσιώτη, Αγγελική, Οι σκηνές της ζωής και ο εικονογραφικός κύκλος του Αγίου Ιωάννη Προδρόμου στη βυζαντινή τέχνη, Athens, 1998, 181, *passim*.

the Life of St. Phanourios in the esonarthex,¹ painted by Eirikos Konstantinos, as already noted. I reproduce here St. John preaching from the former cycle (Fig. 716). He is followed by a group of Jews and indicates Christ, represented behind a rocky hill; the inscription is a variant of the Gospel of John, 1:15: [*John bare witness of him and cried saying*] *This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.*

The esonarthex reveals two more rare subjects: a celestial Great Entrance² in the shallow conch of the apse and a Holy Trinity in the form of a *trikephalos* angel in the 'triumphal arch' of the narthex, above the figure of Christ Pantokrator. The procession of the Great Entrance, inscribed Η ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ, consists of angels approaching Christ, who stands in front of a ciborium and receives them with a blessing gesture (Fig. 299). He is clad in an elaborate patriarchal *sakkos*. Two angel-deacons carrying short candle-stands lead the procession. An angel-deacon holding two *hexapteryga* standards follows them. An oblong, white cloth decorated with black stripes hangs from his left shoulder; it may be identified as an *omophorion*, which is also carried during the Great Entrance; this angel-deacon is unique among representations of this scene. An angel-deacon follows, whose head is covered with a red *aer* decorated with a cross in gold. The next angel-deacon carries the paten on his head, covered with a red *kalymma*. The figure following represents an angel-priest, to be distinguished as such by his *phelonion*; he bears the chalice, half covered with a red *kalymma* which he holds together with the stand of the chalice. The next figure is badly preserved; it may also show an angel-priest holding a chalice.³

The Holy Trinity in this narthex is visualised by a *trikephalos* angel, which is a very rare depiction in Byzantium.⁴ An angel with three heads is depicted in a

¹ Vassilakes-Mavrakakes, M., "Saint Phanourios: Cult and Iconography," *DChAH*, Series IV, vol. 10 (1980-1981), 223-237. *Byzantinisches Kreta*, 320-321, drawing 281.

² On the Great Entrance see: Fortescue, A., in *DACL*, III.1, 1281-1286, s.v. *Divine liturgie*. Lucchesi Palli, E., in *LCI*, 3, 103-106, s.v. *Liturgie, himmlische*. Wessel, K.I., in *RbK*, III, 119-131, s.v. *Himmlische Liturgie*, and Pallas, D.I., in *RbK*, III, esp. 18-19 and 35-43, s.v. *Himmelmächte, Erzengel u. Engel*, all with bibliography. See also, Grondijs, *Croyances*, 194-199, and in *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire*, 74 (1962), 665-703. Ștefănescu, *L'illustrations des liturgies*, 71-77 and 189-191. Tatić-Djurić, *Engel*, 69-71. Schulz, *Liturgie*, 161f., 172, 182f. Hamann-Mac Lean, *Grundlegung*, 134-137. Taft, *Great Entrance*. Walter, *Art and Ritual*, 217-221. Spatharakis, *Agia Trias*, figs. 15-16. *Idem*, *Great Entrance, passim*, figs. 2-16, 26-30. I have explained in my previous publications on this subject, that I use the term *Great Entrance* for this specific picture instead of the term *Divine Liturgy*, which has been applied to more than one subject.

³ For a more detailed description of this scene see Spatharakis, *Great Entrance*, 300-301, figs. 10-12.

⁴ Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 204-205, fig. 352. *Byzantinisches Kreta*, 320, drawing 281. Spatharakis, *Great Entrance*, 310-311, fig. 24.

mandorla and worshiped by four angels; more angels can be vaguely distinguished in the lower part of the scene. The body of the *trikephalos* angel is surrounded by the symbols of the four Evangelists. The depiction of a *trikephalos* goes back to classical antiquity (Hekate, Hermes, Geryon), but is also found in other cultures.¹ It flourished in the West since the thirteenth century as one of the representations of the Holy Trinity.²

Quite exceptional is a scene from the Life of St. Mary of Egypt,³ painted in the nave dedicated to the Virgin (Fig. 300). The monk Zosimas found her body across the river Jordan; a few words were written on the ground, next to her head: St. Mary was asking Zosimas to bury her at that place. He sighs in despair, because he could not dig without proper tools, and then saw a huge lion licking the soles of St. Mary's feet. He was terrified and made the sign of the cross.⁴ The lion began to fawn upon Zosimas who asked it to dig a grave with its claws. The scene in Valsamonero shows St. Mary of Egypt lying dead in the foreground; above her body her name is written: Η ΑΓΙΑ ΜΑΡΙΑ Η ΑΙΓΥΠΤΙΑ. Above her head the words, which Zosimas read on the ground, are written: ΘΑΨΩΝ ΑΒΒΑ ΖΩΣΙΜΑ ΤΟΙΣ ΤΑΠΕΙΝΗΣ ΜΑΡΙΑΣ ΤΟ ΛΕΙΨΑΝΟΝ ΕΝΤΑΥΘΑ ΑΠΟΔΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΧΟΥΝ ΤΟ ΧΟΪ. They are a variation of those one finds in the *Vita Mariae Aegyptiae* by the Patriarch of Jerusalem Sophronios;⁵ St. Zosimas, clad in monk's attire, stands to the left and addresses the lion digging a pit. His words are written above the lion and are also a variation of Sophronios' text; they read as follows: ΕΠΕΙΠΕΡ Θ[ΗΡΙΟΝ] Η ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΕΠΕΤΡΕΨΑΙ ΤΑΦΗΝΑΙ ΕΝΤΑΥΘΑ ΠΟΙΕΙΟΝ ΟΥ ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΟΝΥΞΙΝ.⁶

The full cycle of the Akathistos is painted in the barrel-vaults of the middle and the western bay of nave dedicated to the Virgin (Figs 305-309). It dates from ca. 1430 A.D. This date is based on the stylistic similarities between the figures, e.g., of oikos 19 and the angels of the Greet Entrance in the esonarthex, dated

¹ Kirfel, W., *Die dreiköpfige Gottheit. Archäologisch-ethnologischer Streifzug durch die Ikonographie der Religionen*, Bonn, 1948. Hackel, A., *Die Trinität in der Kunst. Eine ikonographische Untersuchung*, Berlin, 1931, esp. 98-117 about the Holy Trinity.

² Kirfel, *op. cit.* 148 ff., figs. 151 ff. Braunsfels, *Dreifaltigkeit*, p. X, figs. 22-23.

³ Migne, *PG*, 87, 3697-3726. A translation in English by Maria Kouli in *Holy Women of Byzantium: The Saints' Lives in English Translation*, edited by Alice-Mary Talbot, Washington, D.C., 1996, 65-93, esp. 70-93. Avner, T., "Towards retrieval of a Byzantine cycle of Maria Egyptiaca," *XVIII International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Summaries of Communications*, Moscow, 1991, 93-94.

⁴ It is interesting to note that, according to a legend of St. Zosimas, the saint is not afraid of lions and other wild beasts, but lives among them: Halkin, F., "Un émule d'Orphée. La légende grecque inédite de saint Zosime, martyr d'Anazarbe en Cilicie," *Analecta Bollandiana*, 70 (1952), 249-261; reprinted in *Idem, Martyrs Grecs Ile-VIIIe s.* (Variorum Reprint, CS30), London, 1974, article no. 1.

⁵ Migne, *PG*, 87, 3724C

⁶ Migne, *PG*, 87, 3725A.

1431 A.D.¹ (Figs. 55 and 299). The cycle begins in the upper part of the southern half of the barrel-vault of the middle bay, continues to the western bay, jumps to the upper part of the northern half of the barrel-vault of the western bay and, going around, ends in the lower part of the northern half of the barrel-vault of the middle bay. The lower part of the lower scenes on the southern half of the barrel-vaults is 'cut' by the arches leading to the southern nave. I do not, however, think that the arches were opened after the execution of the paintings, but that the artist adapted the shape of these frames to the already existing arches.

Oikos 1, decorated with an Annunciation scene, is similar but not identical to oikos 2 in Roustika and even closer to that in Meronas (Figs. 37, 1, 368 and 362). The Archangel Gabriel approaches with wide steps the Virgin, who sits in an antithetical attitude on a wooden bank. Above them, three light beams descend from a segment in the direction of the Virgin; the middle beam is longer. The architectonic background is richer than that seen in Roustika and Meronas.

Oikos 2, the second Annunciation scene, shows the Virgin standing and outstretching both hands, by which her doubts to the words of the Archangel are better expressed (Figs. 38 and 382). The angel with the odd position of his wing can be better observed in Vori, where also the Virgin is depicted in a similar but not identical attitude (Figs. 30 and 383). An aedicula in good perspective is the main decoration of the background.

Oikos 3, again reveals the Virgin standing and addressing the Archangel Gabriel, both been placed in front of a large construction in the background (Figs. 39 and 395). The gesture of the Virgin is this time less expressive than in the previous oikos. The artist at Valsamonero has proved himself more consistent than those in the other Cretan churches, by depicting the Archangel Gabriel in all three scenes in garments of the same colour, which his colleagues did not.

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, follows the iconography especially invented for this oikos and shows two angels holding a red veil behind the sitting Virgin (Figs. 40 and 414). A red drapery is also painted above her, but it belongs to the rich architectonic setting of the background. Seven triangular rays emerge from a segment in the upper part of the scene. The appearance of angels, instead of maidens seen in Roustika, Meronas and other cycles, is rare (Figs. 409-419). They appear again only in Ochrid, if we are to judge from the halos of the two figures holding the veil (Fig. 413).

Oikos 5, decorated with the Visitation, also reveals an unusual iconographic feature (Figs. 41 and 422). Two female servants watch the embrace of the Virgin

¹ Spatharakis, Great Entrance, 332-335. On the Akathistos in this church see also Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 16, 50, 56-57, 71, 74, 76, 80, 89, 91, 95, 98, 101, 104, 106, 115. Spatharakis, Rethymnon, 215-217, 219.

and Elisabeth; they witness the first earthy recognition of the immaculate conception of Christ. One servant is occasionally seen in other cycles and two ones again in Matejče (Figs. 94 and 423).

Oikos 6, the Doubts of Joseph, is embellished with the figures of the Virgin and Joseph showing a much greater motion than that seen in the previous two Cretan churches (Figs. 42 and 435-436). The Virgin rises from her seat in protest to the accusations of Joseph. The latter has placed his staff under his arm, in order to gesticulate with both hands, instead of only one, in the direction of the Virgin.

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 43 and 462). The Virgin sits on a mattress and presents the Infant to three approaching shepherds. The latter take actually the place of the three Magi, often represented in Nativity scenes, who appear in the next three oikoi of the Akathistos. A tiny shepherd blowing his bagpipe is painted to the right of the cave. One of the five angels above the cave announces to him *the incarnate presence of Christ*, mentioned in the text of this oikos. Joseph is also added to the scene, but the Bathing of the Child is missing. A segment with three beams of light in the upper part of the scene substitutes the star of Bethlehem. The scene is different from that decorating this oikos in Roustika (Figs. 7 and 459), but very similar to those seen in Kavousi and in the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 33 and 463-464).

Oikos 8, the Journey of the Magi, shows them in three different ages riding on horseback in front of a mountainous landscape (Figs. 44 and 482). A bright star in the upper right corner of the scene shows them the way. They wear large golden crowns on their heads, which is a rare iconographic feature deriving from the West.

Oikos 9, the Adoration of the Magi, reveals several unusual details (Figs. 45 and 496). The Virgin is shown sitting in front of a rocky landscape. She holds the Child in the right hand, which is blessing in the direction of the Magi; in the left hand, she holds the gift that she has received from the first Magus, which is a rare iconographic feature. This Magus is depicted without his crown, as a sign of respect, standing next to his horse; the other two Magi behind him wear their crowns and approach the Virgin on horseback, which is also a peculiar feature.¹ Two partially damaged figures in short tunics can be distinguished in the upper left corner of the rocky landscape; they are probably the grooms of the horses.²

¹ For this oikos see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 684, with a few more examples including horses in the scene of the Adoration of the Magi, but outside the Akathistos cycles. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 23-24, figs. 59a-b.

² In Matejče, a groom with a peculiar headgear holds the reins of the horses on which the Magi arrived (Figs. 98 and 486).

The rocky landscape in the background may be explained by the fact that in a few other cycles the adoration of the Magi takes place in front of the Nativity cave. A similar iconography can be distinguished in the badly preserved scene of the Hodegetria Monastery (Fig. 62).

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, shows them approaching a fortified city on horseback (Figs. 46 and 501). The entrance of the city is placed at the top of a stairway and is occupied by a personification clad in imperial garments with a crown similar to that worn by the Magi. A flying angel exceptionally appears near the city and shows the way to the Magi; he is possibly an allusion to Matthew, 2:12, who mentions that the Magi were warned by God in a dream to avoid Herod, and that they returned to their country by another way. The last verse of this stanza also mentions that the Magi *abandoned Herod as a fool*. The angel must have appeared more than once in the Akathistos cycles, because it is also mentioned in the *Hermeneia*,¹ in combination with the city of Babylon. A flying angel also appears in Cozia, but no city is depicted there (Figs. 139 and 494). The personification of Babylon has been copied from that of Egypt, appearing in the Flight into Egypt, a scene that decorates the next oikos. It also appears in the Cretan churches of Roustika in eastern costume and the Monastery of the Hodegetria as queen (Figs. 10, 63 and 503).

Oikos 11 is decorated with the Flight into Egypt (Figs. 47 and 523). It belongs to the iconographic type in which the Virgin holds the Child. Christ outstretches his hand in the direction of James, the son of Joseph; James leads the pack animal, but looks backwards, in the direction of Christ. One may, however, also propose that the hand of Christ is directed to the falling idols, which are painted as white silhouettes on the fortified city suggesting Egypt. A cupola is visible within the city, which is depicted behind a hill that hides the entrance. The Virgin turns in the direction of Joseph and of a second son of his, who follow her. One may observe, that the stances and glances of the figures in this scene evoke a feeling of a cohesive family. James leading the procession is also visible in the badly preserved scene in Meronas, in Cozia, the Uspenskij icon and in the St. Ferapont Monastery (Figs. 140, 519-521).

Oikos 12 is illustrated with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Figs. 48 and 533). It belongs to the iconographic type that shows Simeon holding the Child and is similar to that seen in Meronas (Fig. 534). The Child looks at Simeon, but extends the right hand to his mother. The Virgin is exceptionally depicted turning her head in the direction of Joseph, but she is pointing to Simeon and the Child, as if she were proud of their relation. The Prophetess

¹ *Hermeneia*, 149. An English translation by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

Anna is depicted behind Joseph. The middle construction of the peculiar architectonic setting in the background represents the baldachin above the altar.

Oikos 13 (Fig. 49) is decorated with a scene fitting oikos 14. The scene decorating oikos 14 (Fig. 50) fits oikos 13, the New Creation, as attested by the pictures of oikos 13 in Roustika and other cycles showing an enthroned Virgin with the Child venerated by one or two groups of men (Figs. 13, 545-551). The Virgin with the Child on her lap in Valsamonero is also flanked by two groups of monks. Those on the right gesture animated at each other, by which the *miracle* mentioned at the end of oikos 13 is visualised. On the roof of the protruding construction in the background, a seated statue has been depicted; two more statues are painted on the roof of the right wing of the building; no reasonable explanation can be given for the appearance of these statues. Several stars decorate the upper part of the scene. A few words from the beginning of oikos 14 are visible in the upper right corner of the scene.

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, has been interchanged with oikos 13, as already noted (Figs. 49 and 570). It is divided into two parts, a division similar to that seen in the badly preserved scene of oikos 16 in Meronas, which should definitely decorate oikos 14. Christ at the upper part of the scene is flanked by the Virgin and St. John the Baptist in a Deësis composition, all three depicted as half-figures. Two more female saints are depicted behind the Virgin, one wearing a white head kerchief and the other a crown. Two unidentifiable saints are painted behind St. John the Baptist. Below the Deësis, two bishops with books in their hands stand in the middle. St. Paul, also with a book in his hand, is represented in front of a group of Apostles on the right. The first figure on the left wears a *loros*, but the piece around his middle is missing, by which it may not be characterised as an imperial *loros*. The left hand of this figure is shown with the palm open in the direction of the onlooker, instead of holding the scroll-like *akakia*, one of the imperial insignia. His hat is round but so much damaged that one cannot determine with certainty whether it is a crown or a *skaranikon*, worn by cantors, as seen, e.g., in Ochrid (Fig. 337). This figure is different from the emperor seen on the right of the scene decorating oikos 24 in the same church, whose costume and insignia are correctly rendered (Fig. 60). It may be, therefore, identified as a cantor rather than as an emperor. The figure behind this one wears a Y-shaped *loros*, which is a characteristic of the emperors before the Comnenian era, but a round crown, which was worn in the Paleologan period. It also appears in Ochrid in oikos 13, which is also interchanged with oikos 14 (Figs. 332 and 569). The two bishops and the group of Apostles to the right are identical in almost every detail, such as the posture of St. Peter looking at St. Paul, the young Apostle behind them and the Apostle's head rising above the group. This oikos is the first one to include emperors.

The wish of Christ to draw the believers to the heights, mentioned in this stanza, was related by the artist to the Deësis of the Last Judgement and to the role of the Virgin and St. John as intercessor. The Deësis compositions found in Meronas and Valsamonero are exceptional.¹

Oikos 15, alluding to the Double Nature of Christ, is rendered, as in most of the other cycles, by depicting Christ twice, once on earth and again in heaven (Figs. 51 and 576). Christ is depicted standing in a mandorla, as in Roustika (Figs. 15 and 575), but the mandorla has several angular extensions. He is flanked by two groups of men. The group on the right shows mainly monastic saints with St. Anthony standing in the foreground. The group on the left represents figures in rich garments and diadems and may be identified with military saints in ceremonial costume. In the upper part of the scene, the half-figure of Christ, surrounded by angels, is placed in a segment from which beams of light extend.

Oikos 16, the Astounded Angels, displays Christ Emmanuel sitting on a throne and surrounded by a large number of angels venerating him (Figs. 52 and 598). This is a customary decoration for this oikos, seen in several other cycles of the Akathistos, but the appearance of Christ Emmanuel, instead of an adult Christ or the Virgin with the Child, is a characteristic of this and two more Cretan churches, those in Roustika and Meronas, where it decorates by mistake stanza 14 (Figs. 596-597). This scene takes place in heaven and decorates the words of this stanza which characterise Christ as *unapproachable as God*.

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, reveals the Virgin frontally sitting on a throne and holding the Child² (Figs. 53 and 607). The latter blesses in the direction of a group of men depicted on the left. A similar group is painted on the other side of the Virgin. The men are clad in either green or light grey robes and wear round hats in green, red, yellow or blue. The figure on the left holds a box, which is a rare iconographic detail; it is probably meant to contain writings, or it is a misinterpretation of the archetype showing a book, as in the other churches. The men gesture and look at each other, as in Roustika (Figs. 17 and 606), expressing their astonishment for the miraculous birth of Christ, alluded to in the text of this oikos.

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, is decorated with a variant of the Anastasis, the Descent of Christ into Hell (Figs. 54 and 629). Christ in a mandorla blesses in the direction of Adam and Eve, above who a group of righteous stands, to which St. John the Baptist points with both hands. Christ turns his head in the direction of two angels, as in Roustika and Ochrid (Figs. 18,

¹ A Deësis representation, but in a very different composition, is also seen in the Uspenskij icon and in the St. Ferapont Monastery for stanza 15, referring to the Double Nature of Christ, as we shall see (Figs. 276 and 287).

² The scene is cut in the lower part by an arch connecting the two naves of the church.

630 and 628). The bearded man behind the angels cannot be identified with certainty. The attitude of Christ has been explained above, in examining this oikos in Roustika, by his wish to deliver Adam and the righteous who have been saved to the angels in Paradise.

Oikos 19, the Defence of Virgins, shows the Virgin with the Child flanked by church fathers and female saints (Figs. 55 and 644). Among the bishops on the right, one may clearly distinguish St. Basil with his long, dark beard. Remarkable is the similarity of the arrangement of the female saints on the left to that in Roustika (Figs. 19, and 643). They may be identified as St. Marina, St. Paraskevi and St. Catherine, not only by their appearance but also by the initial letter of their name written on their haloes. The halo of the saint behind is inscribed with a Φ, from Photini, but her face is not visible. These two Cretan cycles are the only ones to include bishops in this scene.

Oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, displays an asymmetrical composition with Christ enthroned in a mandorla surrounded by three angels (Fig. 56 and 646). Those who declare that their odes cannot be compared to what Christ has offered to mankind and sing *Alleluia*, are represented as bishops; the two foremost bishops may be identified as St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus. A similar iconography can be discerned in the badly preserved scene of this oikos in Meronas and, in a symmetrical composition, in Roustika (Figs. 20 and 645).

Oikos 21, the Shining Lamp, shows the Virgin with the Child standing and flanked by two angels and two groups of believers kneeling, who represent those in darkness illuminated by the incorporeal light (Figs. 57 and 669). Above the head of the Virgin, the upper part of a huge candle protrudes; it reaches to the radiating segment in the upper part of the scene. The background consists of a mountainous landscape. The identity of the men flanking the Virgin cannot be established with certainty because this part of the scene is damaged, but Adam and Eve are possibly included among them. This symmetrical composition is different from the asymmetrical one painted in the Cretan churches of Roustika and Meronas (Figs. 21 and 671). It is, however, seen in a similar but not identical iconography outside Crete, in Matejče and Marko (Figs. 665-666 and 668). The two angels flanking the Virgin in Valsamonero do not appear elsewhere.

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, portrays Christ standing in a frontal position, tearing a scroll in the middle (Figs. 58 and 680). He is flanked by two groups of men, with Adam in front of the left group and Eve of the right one. The appearance of the forefathers in this scene is an uncommon detail in the decoration of this oikos; it can be explained not only because they symbolise all mankind to be saved, but also because the *cheirographon* alludes to the 'contract' that God drew up with Adam.¹ A similar scene, possibly including the

¹ See above, the description of this oikos in Roustika.

figures of Adam and Eve, is seen in the badly preserved oikoi in Meronas and Ochrid (Figs. 331 and 679 and 682).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is embellished with the Virgin with the Child sitting on a wooden throne and flanked by two groups of men (Figs. 59 and 691). The Child blesses in the direction of the group on the right, which consists of cantors, two of whom make musical gestures. They are clad in robes of various colours; the shapes and colours of their hats reveal a great variety. The musical gestures made by the cantors in Valsamonero are unique among the Akathistos cycles in Crete, but appear in Akathistos cycles elsewhere, as we shall see. Two bishops, one of whom may be identified as St. Basil, lead the group on the left. One of the two beardless figures behind holds a golden box; they wear peculiar hats, which at first glance may be taken as crowns, but they are most probably a variant of the cantors' *skiadia*, as seen in stanza 24 of the Serbian Psalter¹ (Fig. 234). The peculiar building in the background — one of the several in this church — is decorated with a quatrefoil and a veil hanging below it. The iconography of this oikos is similar to that seen in Vori, and, with less figures and reduced variety in the costumes, in Roustika, Meronas and Ochrid (Figs. 17, 337 and 689-694).

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, shows a standing Virgin *Platytera* in front of a wooden throne (Figs. 60 and 703). Two *lampadarioi* holding candelabra are depicted in front of the groups flanking the Virgin.² They wear a white upper tunic, scarcely decorated at the collar and hem, and a black headgear. The group on the left includes bishops, while that on the right reveals an imperial couple, which, however, is placed in the second plane. A huge drapery in red is arranged above the Virgin. The iconography of this scene is similar to that in Vori, as we shall see (Figs. 36 and 704). Outside Crete, the closest parallel is found again in Ochrid, where details like the large drapery behind the Virgin, the cantors and the *lampadarioi* are also present (Figs. 337 and 702).

We have seen that in Roustika and the badly preserved scene in Meronas, the hymn is visualised with scrolls held by angels and presented to the enthroned Virgin holding the Child (Figs. 24 and 701). In Valsamonero and, as we shall see, in Vori and elsewhere, the hymn is understood as a chant and rendered with people 'singing' it and beseeching the Virgin to deliver them from every evil and punishment in the hell; clergymen and laymen are accordingly depicted flanking the Virgin.

¹ There are many variants of *skiadia* in Byzantine art. They are primarily shade hats, as the word denotes. They are seen in the form of wide brimmed hats, pointed ones, resembling boats, have various colours and are often trimmed with embroideries. Everyone, including high dignitaries and cantors, wore them, as we shall see.

² Moran, *Singers*, 19, *passim*, mentions that the *lampadarios* took in Late Byzantine sources a musical significance.

I should also like to mention here, but only as a possibility, that the scenes illustrating stanzas 23 and 24 may have been interchanged. The Child in the medallion at the chest of the Virgin in Valsamonero, which symbolises that Christ is not yet born, can be better explained by the text of oikos 23, especially the verses which read: *for the Lord, who holds all in his hand, dwelt in your womb and made you holy*, than by the text of this oikos. The imperial couples in Valsamonero, Vori and other cycles are also better explained by the fifth *chairetismos* of the oikos 23, reading, *hail, precious diadem of reverent kings*. The same is true for the unusual large drapery in the background of the scene: the first *chairetismos* of oikos 23 calls the Virgin *abode* (literally *tent*) of God and Word. We see, thus, that scene 24 illustrates better oikos 23; scene 23 with the cantors on the other hand would also fit the text of oikos 24.

The placement of the imperial couple in Valsamonero in the background, instead of in the foreground of the scene, suggests that it was not the intention of the artist to portray the ruling Byzantine emperors, but to indicate that emperors also venerate the Virgin in general. The composition differs from that decorating oikos 24 in Dečani (Figs. 321), in which the artist clearly shows that it is the ruling family which participates in the veneration of the icon of the Virgin: The portraits of the Tsar Stephen Dušan, his wife Helena and his son Stephen Uroš were, therefore, painted in the foreground, immediately next to the icon of the Virgin. It is evident that the artist of Valsamonero did not wish to omit the Byzantine emperor, which he most probably found in his model, as the picture of this oikos in Vori suggests, but he was obviously obliged to moderate his presence by painting the figure of a comparatively large *lampadarios* in front of them; this *lampadarios* had to be repeated on the left side of the figure of the Virgin for the sake of symmetry. It is not unthinkable that the reason for hiding the imperial couple behind the *lampadarios* was the presence of the Venetians on the island, and possibly in the monastery, expressed not only by western stylistic influence on the paintings of this church, but also by iconographic ones: the Philoxenia of Abraham, the customary Byzantine representation of the Holy Trinity, is replaced here by a western Holy Trinity showing a *trikephalos*, an angel with three heads, as already noted. This cannot be said for Vori, where the emperor is placed in the foreground (Figs. 36 and 704).

Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion

Only twelve oikoi of the Akathistos are visible in the Monastery of the Hodegetria in Kainourgion Province, dating to the beginning of the fourteenth century.¹ They are painted in the barrel-vault of the western bay of the church. This part of the church is now a prolongation to the West of the southern nave of a twin church with no paintings, which seems to be of a later date.² The paintings are only partially preserved. Several of them have been repainted sometime during the Post-byzantine period, as this can be clearly seen in the scene showing the Doubts of Joseph (Fig. 61). The iconography of the original scenes has been, however, preserved, as the figures from which the repainting has partially disappeared suggest and as several figures from the Akathistos cycle, which also appear in St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, confirm; the iconography of the latter cycle depends in fact on that seen in the Hodegetria Monastery, as we shall see below.

Beside the Akathistos cycle, the paintings of the church exhibit the Evangelist Matthew and St. Paul of Thebes on the northern wall, below the Akathistos scenes; in the lower zone of this wall, the heads of two unidentifiable saints and the halo of a third one are visible. The southern wall reveals a few remnants of painting below the Akathistos, among which the Evangelist John can be identified; only the upper part of his body is preserved, but in a bad state; he turns his head backwards, presumably in the direction of the hand of God, which is not visible any more. The figure of the Evangelist Matthew is better preserved. It belongs to the interesting type showing the evangelist sharpening his pen. He holds a knife in his right hand and a stylus in his left. This type appears in Byzantium in the Paleologan era, but it was popular in the West throughout the eleventh and twelfth century.³ St. Paul of Thebes here is one of the few depictions of this saint; he is depicted seated in a cave, in which he lived for sixty years (Fig. 343); he looks at the raven, which brings food to him; a palm tree is depicted to the right, from the leaves of which his tunic was made; the latter is

¹ Gerola, Elenco, no. 588. *AD*, 25 (1970), *Chronika*, 492f., pl. 427a-b, 428a. Bissinger, in *RbK*, IV, 1113 f. Bissinger, *Kreta*, 119-120 no. 86, figs. 83-84, the Apostle Tribunal, and angel and Apostles from the Ascension in colour, with a date ca. 1300 A.D. or the first decade of the 14th century. Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 208, 215-216, 280, 341.

² The paintings of this church have not as yet been studied. A portrait of the Virgin with the Child, about which more will be said below when examining oikos 13, is published by Vassilakis-Mavrakakis, *Western Influences*, 305-306 fig. 12, who ascribed it to the fourteenth century.

³ Spatharakis, I., *The Left-handed Evangelist. A Contribution to Palaeologan Iconography*, London, 1988, 42, *passim*, figs. 55-62. Buchthal, H., "Toward a History of Palaeologan Illumination," in Weitzmann, K., Loerke, W., a.o., *The Place of Book Illumination in Byzantine Art*, Princeton, 1975, 143-177, esp. 146, figs. 1, 5-6, 36.

painted in an orange colour.¹ The figure of St. Paul of Thebes is found again in this church among the monks depicted in oikos 14 (Fig. 66).

From the Akathistos cycle, one Annunciation scene from the first three oikoi has been preserved; the next visible scene represents the Visitation (oikos 5); it is followed by the Doubts of Joseph and the Adoration of the Shepherds (oikoi 6 and 7); oikos 8 has been damaged, but oikoi 9 to 16 have survived, most of them in a bad state of preservation; only a fragment can be finally seen from the Voiceless Orators (oikos 17).

The only Annunciation scene preserved is badly damaged. The losses of the paintings around this scene are so great, that it is not easy to establish with certainty to which of the first three oikoi this Annunciation belongs. One may, however, distinguish that the Annunciation at the Well is represented, with the Virgin depicted in a similar stance to that seen in Meronas (Fig. 25).

Only the hair of a figure with a halo in front of an architectonic setting is visible of what is possibly oikos 4. These remnants are, however, not sufficient for iconographic observations or even identification of the scene.

Oikos 5, the Visitation, is partially preserved. The Virgin and Elisabeth embracing each other are still visible. The left part of the scene is, however, damaged, as a result of which one cannot know if a female servant were painted there to witness the first earthly recognition of the immaculate conception by Elisabeth, as in Valsamonero (Fig. 41). There is no place available for any additional figures in the right part of this scene.

Oikos 6, the Doubts of Joseph, shows the Virgin standing on a suppedion in an almost frontal attitude (Figs. 61 and 434). She slightly bends her knees and raises both hands in a vivid expression of innocence. Joseph approaches her with wide steps and accuses the Virgin with outstretched hand.

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is partially damaged (Fig. 463). One can discern the Virgin sitting in a mattress in front of the cave and presenting the Infant to the tiny figures of the shepherds who approach it. Joseph and a shepherd in front of him are partially visible in the lower right corner of the scene. Several angels are depicted flanking the upper part of the cave, and a large segment with three triangular beams of light is depicted above it. A very similar but not identical iconography is seen in Valsamonero and Kavousi (Figs. 33, 43, 462 and 464).

Oikos 8, the Journey of the Magi, is totally lost.

Oikos 9, the Adoration of the Magi, is badly preserved (Fig. 62). One can, however, distinguish that the Virgin with the Child is depicted in an identical

attitude to that seen in Valsamonero, including the gift in her left hand (Figs. 45 and 496). A similar horse is also seen in the left lower part of the scene. The rest of the scene may be reconstructed on the basis of what one sees in Valsamonero. The appearance of the Magi on horseback in the Cretan Akathistos is exceptional.

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, is badly preserved (Fig. 63). One can, however, discern, that the Magi approach the city of Babylon on horseback and wear crowns similar to those seen in Valsamonero (Figs. 46 and 501). The personification of the city at the gate wears a round crown. She welcomes the Magi with a similar gesture to that seen in Valsamonero, but her costume is too badly preserved for comparisons.

Oikos 11, the Flight into Egypt, is also badly damaged, one may again distinguish that Joseph is carrying the Child on his shoulders behind the Virgin. The personification of Egypt is shown in imperial garments.

Oikos 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, reveals the Virgin holding the Child, which shows fear for Simeon by turning his body in the opposite direction (Fig. 537). Joseph, holding the turtledoves, is depicted behind the Virgin, and the Prophetess Anna, holding a scroll with her prophecy,¹ stands on a higher level behind Simeon. The artist should have copied another variant of the Hypapante, that showing Simeon holding the Child, because the text of this oikos mentions that the Infant was given to him.

Oikos 13, the New Creation, is illustrated in a different manner than in the other cycles by showing a superb depiction of the Virgin with the Child, seated on a wide, wooden throne (Figs. 64-65, 419 and 555). The text of the beginning of this oikos is partially visible on the upper border of this picture. A red curtain hangs behind the Virgin and several haloes are seen behind it. Two figures flank the throne and draw the curtain aside; the lateral borders of the picture cut off the outer half of these figures, as a result of which one cannot see whether they have wings or not; one may, however, identify them as angels on the basis of their haloes. The curtain behind the Virgin associates this picture with oikos 4; the latter has not been preserved in this church and consequently one cannot compare the two compositions. One may, however, propose, that the artist used the scene of oikos 4 as model for oikos 13, to which he added the figure of Christ.

The picture here, as in the previous churches, is inspired by the second part of oikos 13, in which the *womb without seed* clearly alludes to the Virgin; it consequently shows the Virgin with the incarnated Christ on her lap.² The veil is

¹ On this saint see *Hermeneia*, 163, 189, 285, 293; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 59. Weigert, C., in *LCI*, 8, 149-160, s.v. *Paulus von Theben*.

¹ Only the beginning of this prophecy is visible: ΤΟΥΤΟ ΤΟ ΒΡΕΦΟΣ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΝ [ΚΑΙ ΓΗΝ ΕΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΗΣΕΝ] (This infant created heaven and earth): *Hermeneia*, 87.

² In other representations of this oikos, only Christ, the *new creation* from the first part of the text is depicted, as we shall see below.

consequently associated here with the incarnation of Christ, while in oikos 4 it was related to the conception. The portraits of the Virgin and the Child are rendered in an extremely naturalistic manner. The restrained smiling Child contrasts with the severe portrait of the Virgin; the artist succeeded with this contrast to emphasise even more the drama of the Virgin for the future passion of her child, to which representations of the Virgin with the Child often allude. The allusion to the passion of Christ is made here even clearer by showing the Virgin kissing the blessing hand of the Child. This is indeed a gesture, which we often find in depictions of the Descent from the Cross.¹

The portrait of the Virgin kissing the hand of the Child is a rare iconographic type; I take the liberty to baptise this type, the Virgin *Cheirophilousa*. The representation in the Hodegetria Monastery may, therefore, be considered as a valuable addition to the few examples of this type that have been preserved. One of them can be seen in a Serbian Tetraevangelion kept in the National Library of Belgrade, MS no. 297 (34), ascribed to the thirteenth century.² The style in which this and other miniatures in this codex are painted is a simple, linear, provincial one. The Virgin kissing the hand of the Child is also painted in Cypriot icons: The icon from the Church of Chrysaliniotissa in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishopric in Nicosia, ascribed to the thirteenth century, reveals a Virgin turning her head in the opposite direction of the Child, while kissing its hand (Fig. 270); an almost identical iconography appeared in a now lost icon from the Monastery of St. John Chrysostom in Koutsoventis, dated to the fourteenth century, due to its plastically rendered figures³ (Fig. 270a). Another specimen of the Virgin kissing the hand of the Child is found in the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos⁴ (Fig. 721). It is a fragment of a wall painting, which was transformed to an icon by partially covering it with silver; the fresco is ascribed to ca. 1600 A.D. and the silver bears the date 1859 A.D.

The type of the Virgin kissing the hand of the Child also appears in the West. It is painted in the apse conch of the crypt of the Notre-Dame in Montmorillon-sur-Gartempe (Vienne), dedicated to St. Catherine, and ascribed to ca. 1200

¹ Nagatsuka, Y., *Descente de Croix, son développement iconographique des origines jusqu'à la fin du XI^e siècle*, Tokyo, 1979, with bibliography.

² Grabar, *Images de la Vierge*, 544 and 552-553, fig. 2 on p. 545.

³ Mouriki, D., "Thirteenth-century Icon Painting in Cyprus," *Griffon*, N.S. 1-2 (1985-1986), 9-112, esp. 26-27, fig. 22; reprinted in *Eadem, Studies in Late Byzantine Painting*, London, 1995, 341-442. Papageorgiou, G., *Icons of Cyprus*, New York, 1970, pls. on pp. 18 and 26, in colour. *Idem, Icons of Cyprus*, Nicosia, 1991 (in Greek), 42, figs. 26 and 27; he records a third icon of this type from the church of St. Kassianos, recently cleaned from later repainting.

⁴ Baltogiannis, Chr., *Eikónes Mήτηρ Θεοῦ*, Athens, 1994, 178-180, no. 54, pls. 97-98, with bibliography. My thanks are due to Ms. Chrysanthé Baltogiannis for information on this subject.

A.D.¹ It is debatable whether this type of Virgin has its origin in the East or the West. Grabar commented on the opinion of Perdrizet, who believed that this type derived from Byzantium, by ascribing this and other types showing affection between the Virgin and the Child to the realistic and popular early Christian art of Egypt;² he produced, however, no written sources or pictorial evidence for the precise type under discussion, by which his attribution to Egypt may be considered as purely hypothetical. The Virgin kissing the hand of the Child was characterised by Demus as a lyrical motive which goes without doubt back to Byzantine or Italo-Byzantine models. He did not, however, document his theory.³

Vassilakis-Mavrakakis, referring to the Virgin and the Child in the Hodegetria Monastery, thought, "that this scene looks far more a trecento work of painting than a Byzantine one" and "that it may be the work of a Cretan artist, who had thoroughly studied Italian styles of painting. The posture of the Virgin with her knees apart, the modelling of her face with the large expressive eyes, the long thin nose and the small mouth together with Christ's attitude of touching His mother's lips with His right fingers find their parallels in the Madonnas of Cimabue, Giotto and their followers."⁴ She did not mention the examples of this iconographic type of Virgin referred to by me above. The closest Western parallel of the head of the Virgin is that of the Madonna by the San Bernardino Master in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, dated by a now lost inscription 1262 A.D.⁵ and painted under Byzantine influence. It is rendered in a less plastic style than that in the Hodegetria Monastery (Fig. 720).

¹ Perdrizet, P., "La Vierge qui baise la main de l'enfant," *Revue de l'Art chrétien*, 49 (1906), 289-294, fig. 1. Schrade, H., *Die Romanische Malerei. Ihre Malestas*, Cologne, 1963, 176 ff., drawing on p. 177, fig. 272.6, with a date in the second quarter of the thirteenth century. Demus, O., *Romanische Wandmalerei*, München, 1992, *passim*, esp. 151, pl. LXIII. Hallensleben, H., in *LCI*, 3, 172, s.v. *Maria, Marienbild (Eleusa, Glykophilusa)*. Miljković-Peppek, P., "La fresque de la Vierge avec le Christ du pilier situé au Nord de l'iconostase de Sainte Sophie à Ohrid," *Akten des XI. internationalen Byzantinistenkongresses, München, 1958*, München, 1960, 388-391, ascribed a partially visible Virgin with the Child in this church to the (mid-)eleventh century and characterised it as the earliest example showing Christ with naked, crossed legs; but his reconstruction of the heads, which would show the Virgin kissing the hand of the Child, is arbitrary.

² Grabar, *Images de la Vierge*, 553.

³ Demus, *Romanische Wandmalerei*, l.c.

⁴ Vassilakis-Mavrakakis, *Western Influences*, 305-306, fig. 12, citing E. Sindona, *L'opera completa di Cimabue e il momento figurativo pregiottesco*, Milan, 1975, pl. IX, XXXIII (Madonnas in Assisi and the Uffizi, which do not resemble much to our Virgin), and *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection, Italian Paintings, Thirteenth to Fourteenth century*. Catalogue by Fern Rusk Sharpley, London, 1960, figs. 20, 25, 39 and 41.

⁵ Stubblebine, J., *Guido da Siena*, Princeton, 1964, 61-64, Figs. 31 and 92, challenged the authenticity of the inscription and suggested a date in the next decade. Corrie, Rebecca W., "Coppo di Marcovaldo's *Madonna del bordone* and the Meaning of the Bare-Legged Christ Child in Siena and the East," *Gesta*, 35.1 (1996), 43-65, esp. 54, fig. 11.

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, which is divided into two parts, is partially damaged (Figs. 66-67 and 572). The half-figure of Christ Emmanuel, instead of an adult Christ seen in Roustika (Figs. 16 and 571), is placed in a polygonal star. Two groups of exclusively monastic saints are depicted below Christ. St. Anthony and St. Paul of Thebes, with his long beard and a rush mat as a tunic, can be identified among the monks of the left group.¹ A monk in a kneeling position and looking upwards in the direction of Christ is depicted in the middle of the scene. The inscription accompanying him reads: ΔΕΙCΙC ΓΡΙΓΟΡΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΕΩC ΚΑΙ ΚΤΙΤΟΡ[ΟC]. The priest Gregorios, who was also a monk — if we may judge from his habit —, may be identified as a sponsor; the inscription does not, however, specify whether he was the donor of the church or of its decoration only. He chose to be depicted in this oikos, because he wanted to be included among those who Christ would draw to the heights, as mentioned in the last verse of this oikos. This is the second picture with a portrait that may be identified with certainty as such among all Akathistos cycles, the first known one being that decorating stanza 24 in Dečani, which shows the Tsar Stephen Dušan and his family (Fig. 321).

Oikos 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is partially damaged (Figs. 68 and 577). Christ is depicted twice, as in most of the scenes decorating this oikos, (Figs. 574-585). In the upper part of the picture, the bust of Christ can be distinguished, as also seen in Valsamonero, which reveals a similar iconography and which may be used for reconstructing the losses of this scene (Figs. 51 and 576). Christ is again painted standing in an angular mandorla, blessing with both hands in the direction of two groups of men. The group on the right consists of monastic saints with St. Anthony in the foreground; that on the left shows figures in luxurious garments, possibly military saints in their court costume, if we are to judge from the figures of the left group in Valsamonero.

Oikos 16, the Astounded Angels, reveals an enthroned Virgin with the Child on her lap (Figs. 69 and 593). She is flanked by angels venerating Christ, to whom this oikos is addressed. The Child in the arms of the Virgin visualises the words of this oikos which describe Christ as *a man approachable by all* and *living among us*. It also appears in St. Nicholas Orphanos and Dečani (Figs. 87, 316, 592 and 594). This is a different iconography to that seen in the other Cretan churches in Roustika, Meronas and Valsamonero, which reveal Christ Emmanuel alone and in which also seraphs appear (Figs. 14, 52 and 596-598). This scene takes place in heaven and decorates the words of this stanza which characterise Christ as *unapproachable as God*.

¹ It is mentioned above, that St. Paul of Thebes is again depicted in this church seated in a cave (Fig. 343).

Only a few remnants have been preserved from oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators. One may with difficulty distinguish a few standing men, who belong to the group on the left of the Virgin.

Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra

The Akathistos cycle has been partially preserved in the tiny church of the Virgin, measuring 5.10 x 3.85 m, which is situated in the cemetery outside the village of Kavousi in Hierapetra Province. It may be dated in the beginning of the fifteenth century.¹ Only the barrel-vault of the western bay has retained wall paintings in this church, while those on the western and the lateral walls have been damaged. The Akathistos cycle begins with the three Annunciation scenes in the lower zone of the southern half of the barrel-vault. A fourth scene, to the West of the Annunciation scenes, cannot be identified with certainty, because it is badly damaged. Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, is painted in the lower zone of the northern part of the barrel-vault. To the East of this scene, oikos 8, the Journey of the Magi, has survived in a bad state of preservation; it can be, however, identified as such on the basis of three figures on horseback, one of which raises the hand in the direction of the star of Bethlehem. The next scene represents oikos 7 in a variant of the Nativity scene.

Above the Conception of Christ (oikos 4), Joachim in the Desert is depicted, seated in a pensive attitude and conversing with shepherds. This scene does not belong to the Akathistos cycle, but to that of the Life of the Virgin. The following scene is badly damaged and only a tower can be seen in the upper left corner. The artist has not painted all the scenes from this cycle, so that one cannot identify with certainty this scene as the Prayer of St. Anne in her garden. The next scene is also badly preserved, but we can discern details belonging to the Birth of the Virgin. Above the Annunciation scenes of the Akathistos, three badly preserved frames are painted. Only that to the right, showing a man and a woman embracing each other, can be identified with certainty as the Meeting of Joachim and Anne. A few busts of the Ten Martyrs of Crete have been also preserved; they are painted in a vertical band, one above the other. This band imitates an arch and divides the church into two bays. Only the Ascension of Christ and a prophet are partially visible in the entire eastern bay. Peculiar is that the prophet is painted in the easternmost part of the barrel-vault, here in the northern part of it, even to the East of the Ascension scene.

¹ This church does not appear in Gerola's, Elenco. Borboudakis, in *AD*, 25 (1970), Chronika, 495, pls. 429a (detail from oikos 4) and 430a (bust of Christ from the Ascension), with a date in the 15th century. Maderakis, Themata, fig. 37 (oikos 4).

In conclusion, only the decoration of five scenes from the Akathistos cycle, oikoi 1-4 and 7, are in a state of preservation that permits iconographic observations.

Oikos 1 is decorated with the Annunciation at the Well. The iconography of the figures is similar to that seen in Roustika and Meronas (Figs. 1 and 24); they only differ in that the Virgin's left hand holding the rope is raised higher, above a higher well; the rich background is also different.

Oikos 2, reveals the angel of the Annunciation in a peculiar attitude, caused by the odd positioning of his wings (Figs. 30 and 383). The standing Virgin answers him by outstretching both hands, but less emphatically than in Valsamonero, where also the angel has a similar stance, which, however, is less striking, because he is partially damaged (Figs. 38 and 382). The architectonic background is again different.

Oikos 3, the third Annunciation scene of the Akathistos, shows the Virgin standing and the angel approaching her (Figs. 31 and 396). Both figures, especially the Virgin, are identical in almost every detail to those seen in Valsamonero, in attitude and arrangement of the draperies around the bodies (Figs. 39 and 395). Even the building on the background derives from a similar archetype. They differ in style, that in Kavousi being classicistic, and that in Valsamonero baroque.

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, portrays the Virgin sitting on a bench (Figs. 32 and 415). Two maidens hold a white veil, spread behind her throne. The posture of the Virgin is again almost identical to that seen in Valsamonero (Figs. 40 and 414). This is also true for the form of the veil, which is shorter and of a red colour in Valsamonero, and of the attitude of the maidens who substitute the angels of Valsamonero.

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 33 and 464). The Virgin is shown sitting in a mattress in the entrance of the cave; the Infant in a manger is painted next to her. Three shepherds approach her, one of whom indicates the angels singing of the incarnation of Christ, as mentioned in the text of this stanza. Joseph is depicted sitting in the lower right corner of the scene. This picture is again very similar to that seen in Valsamonero and in the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 43 and 462-463).

Panagia, Vori, Pyrgiotissa

The Panagia outside the village of Vori in Pyrgiotissa Province is a single nave church, divided in four bays by three arches.¹ The paintings may be dated to ca. 1400 A.D. The Akathistos cycle is painted in the barrel-vaults of the two middle bays. The state of preservation of almost all paintings in this church is bad, but one can distinguish the upper part of the following oikoi: the first three oikoi representing Annunciation scenes, oikos 4 showing the Virgin enthroned and a large veil behind her held by four angels, oikos 5 revealing the Visitation and oikos 6 depicting the Doubts of Joseph. Oikoi 7-16 and 19-22 are too badly preserved for iconographic observations. On the other hand, the entire pictures of oikoi 17, 18, the Salvation of the World decorated with an Anastasis variant, 23 and 24 have been preserved (Figs. 34-36).

A cycle of the Life of the Virgin, painted in the eastern bay, and a Koimesis below oikoi 11 and 12 are included among the remnants of the paintings in this church. The figure of the Virgin in the Koimesis scene is depicted for a second time in the upper part of the picture, seated in a mandorla while entering heaven.

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, is badly preserved (Figs. 34 and 605). One can, however, discern that the Virgin with the Child is seated on a throne in a similar attitude to that seen in Valsamonero (Figs. 53 and 607); the architectonic setting in the background is also similar. The orators on the left are clad in long robes and have *skaranika* hats in light colours. The men on the right have similar, darker costumes. The foremost figure on the left holds a book, a feature already seen in Roustika (Figs. 17 and 606).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is badly preserved, but one can clearly distinguish that the Virgin is frontally depicted on a throne (Figs. 35 and 692). Christ on her lap blesses with both hands in the direction of two groups of men. The group on the right is led by a figure clad in imperial garments with the *loros*. A child holding a book, presumably a novice, is depicted behind the emperor. The group on the left shows bishops and cantors in *skaranika* hats. The architectonic background incorporates the cupola of a church in the middle. Emperors also appears in Marko and Cozia, but in a liturgical scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin, in the Uspenskij icon and St. Ferapont, venerating an icon painted on the façade of a Russian church, as we shall see below, and in Valsamonero in oikos 24, as already noted (Figs. 133, 146, 60, 283, 293, 697-700 and 703); two novices also appear in Marko, but in stanza 24 (Figs. 134 and 709).

¹ Gerola, Elenco, no. 581.

The clergymen in the scene are possibly inspired by the sixth *chairetismos* of this oikos, in which the Virgin is greeted as *holy exaltation of dutiful priests*. The imperial figure may be explained by the fifth *chairetismos*, in which the Virgin is called *precious diadem of reverent kings*.

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, portrays an orant Virgin in front of a large drapery, to whom the Akathistos is offered in this oikos by those asking for deliverance from punishment in the world to come (Figs. 36 and 704). In the group on the right a figure in imperial garments is visible and the hats of cantors. In the group on the left, a figure in red flanked by bishops can be distinguished. The scene is similar but not identical to that seen in Valsamonero, which also reveals an emperor and a large drapery in the background (Figs. 60 and 703). An emperor also appears in Dečani, portraying Tsar Stephen Dušan (1331-1355), his wife Helena and his son Stephen Uroš (Figs. 321 and 711).

Panagia Olympiotissa, Elasson, Thessaly

The wall paintings in the church of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson have been variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.¹ The Akathistos cycle is painted in the diakonikon and the ambulatory. Only oikoi 1-4, 11, 17-19, 21, and 23-24 have survived in various stages of preservation, while oikoi 5, 6-10, 12-16, 20 and 22 are totally or almost totally destroyed.²

The Annunciation scenes, decorating the first three oikoi of the Akathistos, the first of which is badly preserved, do not show any particularities³ (Figs. 72-73, 375 and 398). One may mention that the Archangel Gabriel is depicted in all three instances in imperial attire with the *loros*, which is actually not an unusual phenomenon for angels and archangels. None of these three scenes shows the Annunciation at the well or, more important, a flying angel, decorating a few cycles elsewhere.

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, is partially preserved⁴ (Figs. 74 and 416). The Virgin is depicted seated on a wooden throne. A red veil is fastened on a

¹ See on this church the sumptuous publication by Constantinides, E.C., *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson in Northern Thessaly*, 2 Vols. (Publications of the Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens, No. 2), Athens, 1992; she dated the church in 1296. G. Velenis, "L'église Panagia Olympiotissa et la chapelle de Pammakaristos," *Zograf*, 27 (1998-1999), 103-112, supported the date 1345 A.D. Both publications include an extensive bibliography and give the various dates suggested by previous scholars.

² Constantinides, *Elasson*, 84, 90, 134-177, plans XII and XIV. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 11-13, 141-146; plans 6-11, *passim*, figs. 15-29b.

³ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 138-142, pls. 80-83 in colour, and 211 and 120a-b. Pätzold, 16-18, figs. 15-19.

⁴ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 142, pl. 84b.

pole behind the throne, the end of which is held by a maiden on the left. Another maiden may be postulated on the other side of the Virgin, which is damaged. The veil symbolises the power of the Highest overshadowing the Virgin, mentioned in the text of this oikos. A similar iconography for this oikos is seen in several churches, e.g., in Matejče, the Marko Monastery, and in Dečani, in which four female figures flank the Virgin. Angels, instead of maidens, hold the veil in Ochrid, Valsamonero and Vori (Figs. 410-418).

Oikos 11, illustrated with the Flight into Egypt, is partially visible. The scene belongs to the iconographic type that shows Joseph leading the procession and turning his head in the direction of the Virgin, who holds the Child. The personification of Egypt at the gate of the city is clad in imperial garments. Constantinides distinguished more figures at the gate and black idols falling from the ramparts.¹

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, shows the Virgin *dexiokratousa* enthroned; she is flanked by men clad in contemporary robes and holding unfurled scrolls; their heads have been damaged² (Figs. 70 and 608). A Virgin *dexiokratousa* is also depicted enthroned in the Skopelos icon, but the men flanking her are clad in antique *chiton* and *himation* (Figs. 247 and 609). The enthroned Virgin is also seen in Crete and Ochrid (Figs. 604-607), whereas a standing Virgin is depicted elsewhere, e.g., in Dečani, the Marko Monastery and Cozia (Figs. 616-618).

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, is decorated in a unique manner³ (Figs. 76 and 620). Christ Emmanuel enthroned and blessing with both hands substitutes an adult Christ, the latter seen in other cycles belonging to the same type of decoration for this oikos, e.g., in Cozia (Figs. 143 and 622) and in the church of the Apostles in Kalamata.⁴ Moreover, the figures flanking Christ in Elasson, beardless youths slightly differentiated from female ones only through their garments, do not appear elsewhere. This type of decorating this oikos illustrates the words mentioning that Christ *came among us* in order to save the world, whereas more often variants of the Anastasis scene visualise the salvation of the world from the beginning of this oikos (Figs. 626-630).

Oikos 19, the Defence of Virgins, is illustrated with a Virgin enthroned on a high pedestal with steps; the upper part of her body has been damaged⁵ (Figs. 77 and 634). The two groups of female figures flanking her are not designated as saints by means of haloes, as seen in other cycles. This is also the case in Cozia and the partially preserved scene of this stanza in Dečani, in which the maidens wear short sleeves (Figs. 144, 319 and 636-637). In the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, a few of the maidens have short sleeves and *peploi* over the head,

¹ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 147-148, pl. 84c in colour.

² Constantinides, *Elasson*, 152-154, pls. 84a, 85, 178. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 34-35, fig. 24.

³ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 154-155, pls. 86b. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 35-36, fig. 25.

⁴ Kalokyris, *Messenia*, 39, pl. 13b. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 93-94.

⁵ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 156-157, pl. 86a. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 36-37, fig. 26.

resembling classical figures (Figs. 165, 191, 633 and 635). The virgins of the text of this oikos are interpreted as female saints in Marko and the Cretan churches (Figs. 20, 55, 129, 638, and 643-644).

Oikos 21, designating the Virgin as a lamp full of light, shows the Virgin standing in a praying attitude and flanked by two groups of men, again beardless, placed in a cave¹ (Figs. 71 and 665). Constantinides identified the figures flanking the Virgin as women. Their faces are indeed similar to those of the maidens seen in oikos 19 and 24, but also to the male figures in oikos 18 (Figs. 76-78). The only criterion left for establishing their sex is, therefore, their costume, which is alike to the men in oikos 18 rather than to the women in oikos 19 and 24. This symmetrical type of decorating this scene is also found in Matejče, Marko, Valsamonero and in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 57, 108, 131, 281, 663, 666, 668-669); it only differs from them in that the worshippers in the cave are placed high, flanking the upper part of the body of the Virgin, because the scene is painted in a spandrel. The praying attitude of the Virgin corresponds to that seen in Matejče, while in other cycles she holds Christ.

The scene decorating oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is badly preserved² (Fig. 78 left). An icon in the middle is postulated on the basis of a part of the *podea* that has survived. In the right part of the scene, one can see two cantors wearing *skiadia*, one of whom makes a musical gesture. The remnants of the red robe of another cantor and of a bishop's costume are visible above them. The iconography of this oikos, characterised by the depiction of the icon of the Virgin, instead of the Virgin herself seen in another variant of this oikos, is also found in Marko and Cozia, where an emperor has been added to the scene (Figs. 133, 146 and 697-698). The appearance of the icon of the Virgin transforms the scene to a liturgical one.

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is fragmentarily preserved (Fig. 78, right). Constantinides identified the veneration of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria by various figures, among which female ones; the presence of women in the scene is characterised by the author of the church in Elasson as unique.³ Women also appear in the procession of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria decorating this stanza in the Uspenskij icon, but the iconography used in this icon is different (Figs. 278 and 713). A similar iconography to that seen in Elasson is also applied in Dečani, prolifically in the Marko Monastery, in Matejče, the Synodal Akathistos, the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 706-711). Another variant shows the Virgin instead of her icon venerated; it appears in Crete, Ochrid and Cozia (Figs. 701-705).

¹ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 158-161, pl. 87 in colour.

² Constantinides, *Elasson*, 162, pls. 86c and 92c in colour. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 40, fig. 28. Moran, *Singers*, 105, *passim*, pl. VI, in colour (detail of the heads of two cantors with *skiadia*).

³ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 164-167, pl. 86c in colour. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 42, figs. 29a-b.

Panagia ton Chalkeon, Thessaloniki

Only oikoi 11-13 have been preserved in the church of the Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki, but they are in a bad state of preservation. They have been ascribed to the first quarter of the fourteenth century.¹

In the scene decorating oikos 11, the Flight into Egypt, one may discern the Virgin with the Child on a pack animal leading the procession (Fig. 522). The personification of Egypt in imperial garments can be also distinguished among the figures receiving Christ at the gate of the city.²

Oikos 12, decorated with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, shows the Virgin holding Christ, who shows fear for Simeon by turning his head to him but clutches at the garments of the Virgin (Fig. 538). The figure of the Prophetess Anna is painted between the Virgin and Joseph, which is an infrequent place for her.³ A similar representation, in which the Prophetess Anna is again depicted between the Virgin and Joseph, and the Child in the hands of the Virgin showing fear for Simeon, is seen in Dečani (Figs. 92 and 539).

Oikos 13, the New Creation, belongs to the type of decoration that is inspired by the first part of this oikos and shows Christ, the *new creation*, venerated by two groups of saints⁴ (Figs. 304 and 553). Christ is depicted on a throne in the middle of the composition; the group on the right shows Apostles, led by St. Peter and St. Paul, and the group on the left saints, led by the young military saints in court costumes St. George and St. Demetrius. The figure of Christ may be substituted by Christ Emmanuel, as in Dečani (Fig. 556), and the group of men flanking him may vary. The other type of decoration of this oikos is inspired by the second part of oikos 13, in which the *womb without seed* clearly alludes to the Virgin; it consequently shows the Virgin with the incarnated Christ on her lap. It is found, e.g., in Meronas, Roustika, Valsamonero, Ochrid and the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 548-551).

St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki

In the church of St. Nicholas Orphanos in Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D., only nine oikoi have been preserved: 5-10 and 14-16. They are painted on the southern

¹ Xyngopoulos, *Akathistos*, 61-75, figs. 1-3, pls. 16-19; see also Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 10-11, 140-141: plans 4-5, *passim*, figs. 11-14.

² Xyngopoulos, *Akathistos*, 62-65, fig. 1, pl. 16.1. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 26, figs. 11-12.

³ Xyngopoulos, *Akathistos*, 65-68, fig. 2, pl. 16.2. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 28-30, fig. 13.

⁴ Xyngopoulos, *Akathistos*, 68-71, fig. 3, pls. 17-19. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 31, fig. 14.

wall of the northern nave.¹ The scenes are not placed in frames, but are separated by architectonic elements or the landscape.

Oikos 5, decorated with the Visitation, is partially damaged and shows no particularities² (Fig. 79). The decoration of oikos 6, the Doubts of Joseph, is also of no particular interest³ (Figs. 79 and 437). The closest parallels, as regards the posture of the figures, is seen in Roustika, Meronas, Ochrid, and reversed in Matejče (Figs. 436, 440 and 442).

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is as usual decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene⁴ (Figs. 80 and 450). One of the several angels surrounding the cave addresses three shepherds; Joseph is excluded from the scene. In the upper left corner of the scene, one may distinguish the partially damaged figures of the three Magi on horseback, although they are not mentioned in the text and although they appear in the next three stanzas which are devoted to them. The three Magi, but on foot, are also included in this stanza in the Marko Monastery (Figs. 117 and 466).

Oikos 8, the Journey of the Magi, simply shows three men of three different ages on horseback⁵ (Figs. 81 and 467). A similar iconographic type is seen in several cycles, as in Valsamonero, Cozia, the Akathistos manuscripts and the icons (Figs. 468-471). Another iconographic type shows the Magi approaching the cave of the Nativity. It appears in Matejče, and the Serbian and the Tomič Psalters (Figs. 478-479 and 481). This type is closer to the text of this stanza, the last verse of which states that the Magi reached the Infant.

Oikos 9, the Adoration of the Magi, is illustrated with the Virgin sitting and holding the Child on her lap⁶ (Figs. 82 and 487). The Magi are depicted on foot, smaller and in a lower level than the Virgin. An angel appears from behind a column of the architectonic background; he looks at the Magi and shows the Child to them. A better preserved Adoration of the Magi is painted in this church as part of the Christological Cycle (Fig. 83). It also includes the angel, and adds a groom holding the horses of the Magi by the bridles; the groom wears a dress in white with a simple decoration and a peculiar headgear. The closest parallel for this stanza, including the angel, is found in Dečani (Figs. 91 and 488). The

¹ Τσιτουρίδου, Ά., *Ο ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος του Αγίου Νικολάου Όρφανού στη Θεσσαλονίκη* (Βυζαντινά Μνημεία, 6), Thessaloniki, 1986, 141-154, pls. 53-59. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 9-10, 138-140: plans 1-3, *passim*, figs. 1-10. *Άγιος Νικόλαος, The Wall Paintings*, ed. by Ch. Bakirtzis, Thessaloniki, 2003, 108-112 by Aik. Tsanana. Kirchhainer, Karin, *Die Bildausstattung der Nikolauskirche in Tessaaloniki. Untersuchungen zu Struktur und Programm der Malereien* (Marburger Studien zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte, 3), Weimar, 2001, 115-123.

² Tsiouridou, *Nicholas Orphanos*, 142, pl. 53.

³ Tsiouridou, *Nicholas Orphanos*, 143-145, pl. 53. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 20, fig. 1.

⁴ Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 681, fig. 1. Tsiouridou, *Nicholas Orphanos*, 145-146, pl. 54. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 20-21, fig. 2.

⁵ Tsiouridou, *Nicholas Orphanos*, 146-147, pl. 55. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 22, figs. 3-4.

⁶ Tsiouridou, *Nicholas Orphanos*, 148-149, fig. 56. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 23-24, figs. 3 and 5.

angel also appears in the Marko Monastery and as a half figure in the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 119, 224 and 489-490).

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, displays the Magi on horseback approaching a fortified city (Figs. 84 and 504). A group of people, standing outside the city, welcomes them. The first man, apparently the ruler of the city, wears a peculiar hat and a robe with decorative long sleeves. This type of decoration for this oikos is also seen in Dečani and with more people in Matejče, but in a different arrangement of the figures (Figs. 99, 313 and 505-506).

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, reveals Christ Emmanuel sitting on a throne. Bishops, cantors and a monk on the right venerate him¹ (Figs. 85 and 565). A similar iconography appears in Dečani (Figs. 314 and 564), but monks have substituted the bishops. This decoration is probably inspired by the words of the text mentioning that *the great God appeared on earth as a humble man*.

Oikos 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is accordingly decorated with the figure of Christ Emmanuel shown twice:² Once in the upper part of the scene sitting on a throne formed by two seraphs, and again in the lower part of the scene sitting on a backless throne and flanked by Apostles (Figs. 86 and 585). A wide shaft of light descends from the upper part and surrounds the enthroned Christ Emmanuel below; Aspra Bardabake saw in this detail the union of the two natures of Christ.³

Oikos 16, the Astounded Angels, is illustrated with angels venerating the enthroned Virgin with Christ on her lap⁴ (Figs. 87 and 592). A similar iconography is found in Dečani and in the Hodegetria Monastery in Crete (Fig. 593-594). The Child in the arms of the Virgin is inspired by the words of this oikos describing Christ as *a man approachable by all*. In other variants of this stanza, the Virgin holding Christ is substituted by an enthroned Christ Emmanuel, or by the figure of Christ Pantokrator, enthroned or in a mandorla. These scenes, especially when a mandorla appears, are inspired by the words of this oikos characterising Christ as unapproachable as God.

¹ Tsiouridou, *Nicholas Orphanos*, 149-150, pl. 56. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 31-32, fig. 7. Bakirtzis, *Άγιος Νικόλαος*, pls. 66-67, entry on pp. 108-112 by Aik. Tsanana.

² Tsiouridou, *Nicholas Orphanos*, 151-152, pl. 58. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 32-33, fig. 8.

³ Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 78-79.

⁴ Tsiouridou, *Nicholas Orphanos*, 152-154, fig. 59. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 33, fig. 10.

Pantokrator Church, Dečani

The Akathistos cycle in the Pantokrator Church in Dečani, a large five-nave church, is painted in the southern part of it.¹ It dates 1348-1350 A.D. Stanzas 1 and 22 are badly preserved and 5-6 missing.

The partially preserved Annunciation scene of the first stanza reveals a rare detail for the Akathistos cycles, but not unusual for the Annunciation scenes of the Christological cycle: a dove is depicted in the beam of light descending from above.²

The better preserved Annunciation scenes for stanzas 2 and 3 show the Virgin and the Archangel standing; they do not reveal any particularities except for the peculiar architectonic background, which is a characteristic of the paintings in this church³ (Figs. 89-90, 310, 378 and 391).

Stanza 4, the Conception of Christ, is decorated with a usual for wall paintings scene: the Virgin is depicted enthroned and four maidens hold a curtain behind her throne⁴ (Figs. 311 and 410). The Holy Ghost has been exceptionally added above the head of the Virgin in the form of a dove; it is placed in a rhomboid that is part of the middle of the seven beams of light descending from a segment, painted in the upper part of the composition.

Stanza 7 is decorated with a full Nativity scene, including Joseph and the Bathing of the Child by two maidens, and naturally angels and shepherd (Figs. 312 and 451). The shepherds, to who this stanza is devoted, do not, occupy a prominent place in the scene, as one would expect. They are painted in the upper right part of the scene, where an angel addresses them. One could moderate the negligence of the artist by suggesting that the first part of the text of this stanza is decorated: *The shepherds heard the angels singing of the incarnate presence of Christ*.

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, reveals the Magi in three different ages riding in a mountainous landscape; the elderly one leads (Figs. 91 and 474). An exceptional detail has been added in this scene: An angel in imperial garments rides on a white horse and shows the way to the Magi. This iconographic detail also appears in the Marko Monastery and the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 118, 223,

¹ Bošković, Dj., Petković, V.R., *Dečani*, 2 Vols., Belgrade, 1941, II, pls. LXXXVII in colour, CXCI, CCXXXIX.2, CCXLIV, CCXLV, CCXLVI, CCXLVII, CCXLVIII and CCLXXV. Lafontaine-Dosogne, J., "Les cycle de la Vierge dans l'église de Dečani: Enfance, Dormition et Akathiste," in *Dečani*, 307-318, esp. 314-316. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 13, 146-152, plans 12-16, *passim*, figs. 30-50b.

² Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXLV. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 16, fig. 30a-b. The dove regularly appears in Annunciation scenes outside the Akathistos.

³ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXLV. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 22-23, figs. 31-32 and 35.

⁴ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXXXIX.2. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 16, fig. 33.

476 and 481). A flying angel, but not on horseback, is also seen in Roustika and Meronas (Figs. 8, 29 and 472-473).

Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, displays the Virgin sitting on a throne and holding Christ; a church-like building rises above a wall behind her¹ (Figs. 91 and 488). The Virgin shows the Magi to the Child, which blesses in their direction. The Magi humbly stride towards them holding their gifts. A standing angel, wearing imperial garments with the *loros* and having his wings spread, introduces the Magi. This is a rare iconographic feature, which also appears in St. Nicholas Orphanos, the Marko Monastery and, less impressive, in the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 82, 119, 224 and 487-490).

In stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, the Magi approach the city riding over a bridge, a detail that does not appear in any other cycle (Figs. 313 and 505). A crowd, larger than usual, clad in eastern costumes, welcomes them.²

Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, shows James leading the pack animal and turning his head in the direction of the Virgin³ (Figs. 92 and 516). The latter outstretches her hand in the direction of the Child, which follows at the end of the procession on the shoulders of Joseph; the Child also outstretches his hands in the direction of the Virgin, by which an intimate relation between them has been created. The personification of Egypt welcomes them at the entrance of the city with three men behind her. The idols are shown falling from the ramparts of the city.

In stanza 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, the Prophetess Anna is by exception depicted between the Virgin and Joseph⁴ (Figs. 92 and 539). The Virgin holds Christ, in contrast to the text of this stanza that mentions that Christ was given to him as an infant. The Child shows fear for Simeon by turning his head to him and his arms to the Virgin. A similar arrangement of the figures is also found in the Panagia *ton Chalkeon* in Thessaloniki.⁵

Stanza 13, the New Creation, is illustrated with a scene inspired by the first part of the text of this oikos: *The Creator revealed a new creation, and showed it to us, his creatures*. It shows Christ Emmanuel on a throne, flanked by two groups of unidentifiable young saints⁶ (Fig. 556). Christ Emmanuel, but in a standing position, is also depicted in Matejče, flanked by two groups of men (Figs. 102 and 557). The figure of Christ Emmanuel is substituted by an adult Christ on the throne in the Panagia *ton Chalkeon* in Thessaloniki, and by an adult Christ standing in the Marko Monastery (Figs. 123, 304 and 553-554).

¹ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXLV. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 23, fig. 35.

² Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXLIV. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 24-26, fig. 36.

³ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. LXXXVII, in colour. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 26, fig. 37.

⁴ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXLVI. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 28-30, fig. 38.

⁵ Xyngopoulos, *Akathistos*, 65-68, fig. 2, pl. 16.2. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 28-30, fig. 13.

⁶ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CXCI. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 31, fig. 39.

The decoration of stanza 14 interprets the *strange birth* of the text with the figure of Christ Emmanuel¹ (Figs. 314 and 564). He is shown enthroned and venerated by monks; all but one of the monks of the group on the right wear white headgears. A similar decoration appears in the church of St. Nicholas Orphanos in Thessaloniki (Figs. 85 and 565). This kind of decoration differs from the more current two types: one appears in Crete and Ochrid and shows Christ above a group of men, and the other mainly appears in manuscripts and shows a variant of the Nativity scene.

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is decorated with the current iconography of this subject found in murals. It shows Christ depicted twice, once in the upper part of the scene and again in the lower part of it. Christ Pantokrator is here represented in the lower part enthroned and flanked by Apostles (Figs. 315 and 578). He is again depicted on a throne formed by two large seraphs in the upper part of the scene.²

Stanza 16, the Astounded Angels, is adorned with angels venerating the enthroned Virgin with Christ on her lap³ (Figs. 316 and 594). A similar iconography is found in St. Nicholas Orphanos in Thessaloniki and in the Hodegetria Monastery in Crete (Figs. 87, 69 and 592-593), while in Matejče a standing Virgin with the Child receives homage from angels and seraphs (Figs. 105 and 595). Christ on the lap of the Virgin is inspired by the words of this oikos describing him as *a man approachable by all*. In other variants of this stanza, the Virgin with the Child are substituted by Christ Emmanuel enthroned, or by Christ Pantokrator enthroned or in a mandorla. These scenes, especially when a mandorla appears, are inspired by the words of this oikos characterising Christ as unapproachable as God.

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, is illustrated with a standing Virgin holding the Child in front of her chest⁴ (Fig. 317 and 618), whereas in other depictions the Virgin is depicted enthroned. Four orators flank the Virgin. They are clad in belted robes and wear elaborate headgears, the *skiadion* and the *skaranikon*. The foremost two orators are writing on unfurled scrolls; their penholder can be distinguished attached on their chest. Similar scenes decorate this stanza in the Marko Monastery and in Cozia (Figs. 127-143 and 616-617).

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, is decorated with a standing Christ in a mandorla, placed in a cave⁵ (Figs. 318 and 626). He holds a large cross in the right hand and a scroll in the left one, resembling Christ from the Anastasis scenes. He does not, however, extend his hand in the direction of the two groups of men, flanking him in an attitude of supplication. This singular

decoration may be considered as an intermediate type between that showing Christ flanked by two groups of men, as seen in Cozia, and the Anastasis type (Figs. 622 and 627-630).

Stanza 19, the Defence of Virgins, is partially damaged (Figs. 319 and 637). It reveals a Virgin holding the Child and flanked by maidens in short sleeves. Similar representations are seen, e.g., in the Synodal and the Escorial Akathistos manuscripts, in which the virgins resemble classical figures (Figs. 165, 188, 633 and 635). In other cycles the virgins are represented as saints (e.g. Figs. 638-639 and 643-644).

Stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, is illustrated with the veneration of the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* placed on a richly decorated stand and held by two young men¹ (Figs. 88 and 654). Cantors and a bishop incensing flank it. The two cantors on the left wear decorated robes and *skiadia*. The first one, the *domestikos* of the choir, makes musical gestures.² The other members of the choir wear white *skaranika*. These figures represent those whose hymns are defeated, mentioned in the text of this stanza. The picture is inspired by the liturgy. A similar iconographic type decorating this stanza is seen in the badly preserved scene in Matejče (Fig. 107). An icon, but showing Christ Pantokrator instead of the Virgin, is also venerated on the Skopelos icon (Figs. 250 and 650). Most of the cycles reveal not the Virgin, but Christ lauded by various groups of people, because this stanza is addressed to him. The decoration of this stanza in Dečani, although exceptional, is consequently less accurate than that showing Christ.

Stanza 21, the Shining Lamp, deviates from the other cycles in that the Virgin is depicted alone, without the believers flanking her in a dark cave³ (Fig. 320 and 667). She holds the Child in front of her chest, while a lighted candle protrudes above her halo, a type also found in other churches, e.g., in Marko (Figs. 131 and 668). A peculiar architectonic setting serves as background. The Virgin alone also appears in Cozia, but in a different posture (Fig. 145 and 659). The two scenes showing the Virgin alone are exceptional, but they must be characterised as incomplete.

Stanza 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is partially damaged. One can, however, distinguish, that Christ is by exception depicted alone, without believers flanking him, while he tears the *cheirographon*.⁴ He is also represented alone in Cozia (Figs. 145 and 674). This type of decoration is the closest one to that described in the *Hermeneia*, according to which Christ stands among houses and tears the *cheirographon* of Adam.⁵ Christ is flanked by two groups of figures

¹ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCLXXV. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 31-32, fig. 40.

² Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXLVIII.2. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 32-33, fig. 41.

³ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCLXXV. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 33, fig. 42.

⁴ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXLVII.1. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 34-35, fig. 43.

⁵ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXCVII. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 35-36, fig. 44.

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 37-38, 52, fig. 46.

² Moran, *Singers*, 104, *passim*, figs. 65-66.

³ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 38, fig. 47.

⁴ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 39-40, figs. 48a-b.

⁵ *Hermeneia*, 150; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

in other cycles (Figs. 677-682). The other main type of decorating this stanza is inspired by the Anastasis scene and appears in the Tomič Psalter, and the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons (Figs. 683-686).

Stanza 23, *Singing of your giving birth*, is illustrated with the Virgin with the Child on her lap sitting on a backless throne and flanked by chanters¹ (Fig. 687). The Child is represented in an antithetical motion, turning his body to the left and his head to the right, in the direction of the *protopsaltes*.² The latter is isolated from the other members of the choir, depicted on the right; he is clad in a decorated robe and wears a *skiadion*. The first cantor on the right has a similar robe but wears a *skaranikon*, like the cantors behind him. The scene belongs to the same iconographic type applied in Meronas, Roustika, Valsamonero, Vori, Ochrid and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 688-696), while another, less frequent variant in Elason, Matejče, Marko and Cozia shows the veneration of an icon of the Virgin and includes an emperor (Figs. 697-698).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is decorated with a liturgical scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria³ (Figs. 321 and 711). The icon is placed in the middle of the composition and supported by two men. A bishop, slightly bending forward in veneration, leads the group on the left. A unique instance forms the royal family depicted on the right. The Tsar Stephen Dušan, his wife Helena and his son Stephen Uroš are portrayed in a frontal position. The imperial couple protectively places a hand on the boy. These are the only portraits which can be identified, whereas the imperial portraits in other Akathistos cycles cannot be identified with certainty.

The veneration of the icon of the Virgin also illustrates most of the Akathistos cycles elsewhere, e.g., in Elason, the Marko Monastery, Matejče, the Synodal Akathistos, the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 706-715). In another variant, it is the figure of the Virgin which is venerated, instead of her icon; it appears in Crete, Ochrid and Cozia (Figs. 701-705).

Church of the Virgin, Matejče

The Akathistos cycle of the Church of the Virgin in Matejče⁴ (1356-1360) begins in the sanctuary and ends on the southern wall of the narthex (Figs. 324-227).

The half-preserved stanza 1 shows a standing Virgin, but Stanza 2 reveals a sitting Virgin expressing her doubts to the Archangel, who is clad in imperial garments (Figs. 93 and 371).

Stanza 3 is decorated with the Annunciation at the Well by a flying angel¹ (Figs. 93 and 359). This is also the case in the Marko Monastery (Figs. 116 and 356). The substitution of the standing angel by a flying one fits better stanza 1, in which it is mentioned that the angel was sent from heaven, as already noted. A similar iconography, including the flying angel and the well, is found in Cozia and the Uspenskij icon, both scenes correctly decorating stanza 1 (Figs. 135, 279, 355 and 357).

Stanza 4, the Conception of Christ, belongs to the iconographic type showing the Virgin on a throne and four maidens holding a veil behind her (Figs. 93 and 411). The large segment in the upper part of the scene recalls that seen in Dečani and Marko (Figs. 410 and 412).

Stanza 5, the Visitation, displays two standing maidservants drawing aside a curtain and witnessing the earthly recognition of the Immaculate Conception by Elisabeth (Figs. 94 and 423). Two maidens also appear in Valsamonero (Figs. 41 and 422).

Stanza 6, the Doubts of Joseph, reveals the Virgin raising her hand in protest to the accusations of Joseph, and the latter supporting his head with a covered hand in a pensive attitude (Figs. 95 and 442).

Stanza 7 is decorated with a Nativity scene including the Bathing of the Child by two maidens, and Joseph in a pensive position (Figs. 96 and 452). The shepherds, to whom this stanza is devoted, are not sufficiently emphasised, but are isolated to the right edge of the scene, while addressed by an angel. This inattention of the artist to stress their presence in the scene may be moderated if one asserts that the first part of the text of this stanza is visualised, which mentions that *the shepherds heard the angels singing of the incarnate presence of Christ*. This stanza is in most of the cycles illustrated with a variant of the Nativity scene. The closest one to Matejče is that in Dečani, where the presence of the shepherds is equally less underlined (Figs. 312 and 451).

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, shows the Magi on horseback approaching the cave of the Nativity (Figs. 97 and 479). The Nativity scene contains all the details of the one decorating the previous stanza, except for the Bathing of the Infant. The artist mistakenly accentuated the shepherds here more than in the previous stanza, by painting them larger and by portraying the Virgin looking at them. A combination of the Journey of the Magi and the Nativity scene is rare and is only seen in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 199,

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 40, figs. 49. Moran, *Singers*, 104-105, *passim*, fig. 67.

² Moran, *Singers*, 104-105, *passim*, fig. 67.

³ Bošković and Petković, *Dečani*, II, pl. CCXLIX. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 42, figs. 50a-b.

⁴ On this church, see Millet, *Peinture*, IV, pls. 29-56. Djurić, *Fresken*, 101-103, 275 note 83, *passim*, with extensive bibliography. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 14, 152-158: plans 17-21, *passim*, figs. 51-76b. Dimitrova, E., "The Akathistos Cycle in the Church of the Holy Virgin at Matejče," *Annuaire de la Faculté de Philosophie*, 23 (49), Skopje (1996), 281-298, figs 1-6, in Macedonian with a summary in English on p. 299. Dimitrova, *Matejče*, 157-168, in Macedonian. A few black

and white reproductions in my publication are old, but show more details than the colour ones, which reveal a later state of preservation of the frescoes, recently photographed by Dr. E. Dimitrova.

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 17, fig. 54.

223 and 478 and 481). These scenes also visualises the last verse of this stanza, which mentions that the Magi reached the Child.

Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, is decorated in a usual way, showing the Magi standing in front of the enthroned Virgin and Child, but includes a rare iconographic detail (Figs. 98 and 486): A groom behind a wall in the background holds the reins of the horses.¹ This detail is also seen in the Adoration of the Magi in the church of St. Nicholas Orphanos, not that included in the Akathistos cycle, but the scene incorporated in the Christological cycle; the groom is shown sitting behind a hill and holding the bridles of the horses (Fig. 83).

Stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, shows the Magi on horseback approaching a fortified city (Figs. 99 and 506). The citizens of Babylon, who wear eastern hats, welcome them. The ruler of the city and the figure immediately behind him distinguish themselves through a decorated band, a reminiscent of the imperial *loros*. More people appear on the walls of the city. A crowd also receives the Magi in St. Nicholas Orphanos and Dečani (Figs. 504-505), but in a different composition of the scene, whereas in most of the other cycles only the Magi and occasionally one more figure appear.

Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, is characterised by a greater number of secondary figures than it is usual (Figs. 100 and 517). James leads the procession, but looks backwards; the Virgin follows on a pack animal and looks at Christ, whom Joseph carries on his shoulders at the end of the pageant. A second son of Joseph is added between them, who also turns his head in the direction of Christ. Christ, although painted at the end of the procession, becomes, thus, the focus of the scene. The personification of Egypt, clad in imperial garments and holding a *cornucopia* (horn of plenty) in her left hand,² welcomes Christ. A large crowd of citizens follow her. Three more figures on the walls of the city in the background, like in the previous scene, look at Christ. The idols can be distinguished falling in spectacular attitudes.

Stanza 12, decorated with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, shows the Child in the hands of the Virgin willingly extending his hands in the direction of Simeon (Figs. 101 and 540), which is also the case in the Marko Monastery (Figs. 122 and 541). In other representations it shows fear for Simeon. The text of this stanza would be more accurately decorated if the Child were in the hands of Simeon, as alluded to in the text.

Stanza 13, the New Creation, is illustrated with a scene inspired by the first part of the text of this oikos (Figs. 102 and 557). The *new creation* is by exception represented as Christ Emmanuel standing in a mandorla and flanked by two groups of men, the left one showing most probably Apostles. Christ

Emmanuel is shown enthroned in Dečani, or substituted by an adult Christ, enthroned in the Panagia *ton Chalkeon* and standing in the Marko Monastery (Figs. 123, 304, 553-554 and 556). Another type of decoration of this stanza shows the Virgin with the Child, instead of Christ alone; the figure of the Virgin is inspired by the second part of this oikos, in which *a womb without seed* is mentioned.

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, is decorated with the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* on a stand venerated by two groups of men (Figs. 104 and 568). That on the left is better preserved and reveals monks. The group on the right is badly damaged, but one can see the *skiadia* hats worn by the figures, which identify them as cantors. An icon also appears in stanzas 17, 20 and 24 in this church, as we shall see. This is the only cycle in which stanza 14 is decorated with an icon, whereas in other cycles icons appear in stanzas 20, 23 or 24. One cannot establish with certainty whether the scene of stanza 14 is copied here by mistake or inspired by the text; it is possible that the artist decided that the believers should turn their thoughts to heaven by venerating an icon.

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is decorated with the current iconography of this subject found in murals, which shows Christ depicted twice (Fig. 103). One can distinguish in this partially preserved scene, that the bust of Christ is depicted in a transparent clipeus carried by angels in the upper part. Christ is again shown enthroned in the lower part of the scene, flanked by two groups of men. The figures of the left group cannot be identified with certainty. The first two figures of the group on the right wear purple robes and crowns; the *loros* is perfectly arranged around the body, with one end hanging over the left arm; therefore, these figures must be definitely identified as emperors, possibly an imperial couple, and not as cantors. Another crowned figure is standing behind and a high dignitary with a *skaranikon* bonnet next to him.¹

Stanza 16, the Astounded Angels, is illustrated with a standing Virgin with the Child swaddled in her left arm (Figs. 105 and 595). She is flanked by angels in imperial garments with the *loros* on the left and by seraphs, substituting the angels seen in the other cycles, on the right. This arrangement of the figures has no parallels in the other cycles. A similar iconography shows the Virgin not standing but enthroned with the Child, while venerated by angels. The Child in the arms of the Virgin is inspired by the words of this oikos describing Christ as *a man approachable by all*. In other cycles it is Christ alone who is venerated by angels.

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, is again illustrated with an unusual scene for this stanza:² The icon of the Virgin is flanked by a few figures, as far as the reconstruction of this badly preserved scene permits one to establish. A similar

¹ Lafontaine-Dosogne, Akathiste, 684, with a few more examples including horses in the scene of the Adoration of the Magi, but outside the Akathistos cycles. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 23-24, figs. 59a-b.

² Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 27, note 145, identifies it as an unlit torch.

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 32-33, figs. 67a-b; the sketches of the head covers are partially arbitrary.

² Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 34, 69, fig. 69.

iconography with an icon is also used for stanzas 14, 20 and 24 in this church, as already noted. An icon is also decorating this stanza in the church of the Apostles in Kalamata.¹ In other churches, e.g., in Dečani, Marko and Cozia, a standing Virgin holding the blessing Child is flanked by orators. Another variant, mainly appearing in Cretan churches, shows the Virgin enthroned (Figs. 604-618).

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, is visualised, as in other cycles, with an Anastasis scene (Figs. 106). It is identifiable as such from the remnants of the lower part of this badly damaged scene.² The most complete Anastasis scene is preserved in Marko, while elsewhere this stanza is decorated with various subjects (Figs. 623, 625 and 627).

Stanza 19, the Defence of Virgins, is badly preserved (Fig. 107). Only the head of the Virgin is visible, which is not sufficient for iconographic observations.³

The scene decorating stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, is also badly preserved⁴ (Fig. 107). One can, however, distinguish that the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* is venerated by cantors. This scene is inspired by the liturgy. A similar iconography is seen in the better preserved scene in Dečani (Figs. 88 and 657). An icon, but showing Christ Pantokrator instead of the Virgin, is also found on the Skopelos icon (Figs. 250 and 650). Most of the cycles reveal Christ lauded by various groups of people, because this stanza is addressed to him. The decoration of this stanza in Matejče and Dečani is consequently less accurate than that showing Christ.

Stanza 21, the Shining Lamp, is one of the best preserved scenes (Figs. 108 and 666). It belongs to the iconographic type that reveals a symmetrical composition, with the Virgin in the middle. She stands in a praying posture with a lighted candle protruding above her halo. Two groups of standing men flank the Virgin. All figures are placed in the entrance of a cave. The composition of the scenes decorating this stanza, in Elason, Marko, Valsamonero and the Uspenskij icon is also symmetrical (Figs. 663, 665 and 668-669). The other type decorating this stanza shows an asymmetrical composition; it is found, e.g., in the Tomič Psalter, the Skopelos icon, Ochrid and Roustika (Figs. 662, 664 and 670-671).

Stanza 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is partially preserved (Figs. 109 and 676). It is exceptionally decorated with an asymmetrical composition showing Christ tearing the *Cheirographon*. He is moving to the left, while turning his head backwards, in the direction of an unidentifiable group of men following

him. A symmetrical composition for this scene is found in Meronas, Roustika, Valsamonero, Marko and Ochrid (Figs. 677 and 679-682). The other main type of decorating this stanza is inspired by the Anastasis scene and appears in the Skopelos icon, the Tomič Psalter, the Uspenskij icon and St. Ferapont (Figs. 683-686).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is also decorated with an asymmetrical composition (Figs. 110 and 696). The Virgin is depicted standing on the left with an angel behind her. She holds Christ in her left hand, who blesses in the direction of a group of men on the right. The group is led by two bishops and is followed by cantors in light coloured robes and *skaranika*. The church in the background may be an allusion to the Virgin, who is compared in this stanza to a living temple. An asymmetrical composition is also seen in the Tomič Psalter, but it shows the Virgin *Hodegetria* enthroned and the Child oddly blessing in the opposite direction of the cantors, who are painted on the right (Fig. 695). A significant variant for this stanza in Elason, Marko and Cozia reveals the exaltation of the icon of the Virgin and includes an emperor (Figs. 78 and 697-698).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, shows the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* on a stand, to which the Akathistos Hymn is presented as a chant by a bishop incensing on the right and cantors wearing *skiadia* depicted behind him; one of them makes a musical gesture¹ (Figs. 111 and 710). Two monks stand on the other side of the icon, one of whom holds a candle and a censer. A similar iconography is applied, e.g., in Elason, Dečani, sumptuously in the Marko Monastery, and in the manuscripts, the Synodal Akathistos and the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 706-715). Another variant shows the Virgin instead of her icon venerated; it appears in Crete, Ochrid and Cozia (Figs. 701-705).

Peribleptos, Ochrid

The following oikoi can be seen in various stages of preservation in the northern façade of the Peribleptos or St. Clement Church in Ochrid, which have been dated to the year 1365 A.D.² (Figs. 328 and 331). Oikoi 4-6 and remnants of 7, 11 and 12; oikoi 13-17 and a part of 18; a part of oikos 20, and oikoi 21-24. The text that has been preserved on the paintings is written in Greek.

¹ Kalokyris, *Messenia*, 39, pl.13b. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 89.

² Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 35-36, fig. 69.

³ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 36-37, figs. 70a-b.

⁴ Millet, *Peinture*, IV, présentation par T. Velmans, pl. 87 (162). Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 37-38, 52, fig. 70.

¹ Millet, *Peinture*, IV, présentation par T. Velmans, 79, pl. 47 (96). Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 42, fig. 76a-b. Moran, *Singers*, 106, fig. 68.

² Grozdanov, *Akathistos*, 39-54, scheme on p. 46, figs. 1-12, with a summary in French on pp. 53-54. *Idem*, *Ochridsko zidno slikarstvo XIV veka*, Belgrade, 1980, 124-132, scheme 31, figs. 89-98. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 14-15, 158-159; plans 22-23, *passim*, figs. 77-83b.

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, is partially preserved (Figs. 328 and 413). The Virgin is depicted enthroned, while two haloed angels hold a veil spread behind the Virgin. Only the heads of these figures are visible, which led Pätzold to the rejection of a previous identification of these figures as angels and the recognition of maidens in them;¹ she based her identification on the maidens found in other churches, but she did not know then, that angels may as well flank the Virgin in this oikos, as seen in Vori and Valsamonero (Figs. 40 and 414). A similar iconography for this oikos is seen in most of the cycles, in which the veil is held by maidens (Figs. 409-418).

Oikos 5, the Visitation, does not reveal any particularities (Figs. 329 and 429). It shows the Virgin taller than Elisabeth, which is not an unusual phenomenon. The closest parallels can be found in Meronas and Roustika, having an almost identical arrangement of the draperies of the figures (Figs. 5 and 428).

Oikos 6, the Doubts of Joseph, shows the Virgin raising both hands in defence to the accusations of Joseph, who points in her direction; he holds a staff, the upper part of which is covered with the drapery of his cloak (Figs. 330 and 440).

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is very fragmentarily preserved and can be only studied from the drawing of Grozdanov (Figs. 328 and 455). An angel, presumably in imperial garments, shows to three shepherds a pensive figure in the upper part of the scene, the latter depicted in front of a part of a square construction; there are, however, no parallels which would help one to identify these remnants with certainty as Joseph in front of the manger, which, moreover, is placed too high in the scene. The identification of the three figures in the lower part of the scene, as seen in the drawing, is even more difficult.

Oikos 11, the Flight into Egypt, is badly damaged (Fig. 331). One can only distinguish a boy, presumably James leading the procession.

Stanza 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, shows Simeon holding Christ in this partially visible scene² (Fig. 331).

The scene decorating oikos 13 fits better oikos 14 and *vice versa*, an interchange that also took place in Valsamonero. The scene fitting oikos 13, the New Creation, is inspired by the second part of text, in which the *womb without seed* of the Virgin is mentioned (Figs. 333 and 550). The Virgin with the Child is consequently depicted enthroned and flanked by two groups of saints; the group on the right represents Apostles and the group on the left military saints in ceremonial costume.³ These two groups are also seen in the Panagia *ton*

Chalkeon in Thessaloniki, but this scene belongs to the iconographic type in which Christ is venerated instead of the Virgin (Figs. 304 and 553).

The scene fitting oikos 14, the Strange Birth, which now decorates oikos 13, shows Christ with outstretched hands above a group of people (Fig. 332 and 569). Two bishops stand in the middle and an emperor behind the left bishop. The group on the right consists of Apostles, led by St. Peter and St. Paul. It is identical in almost every detail to that seen in Valsamonero, as already noted in examining this oikos above (Figs. 49 and 570).

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is decorated with the current iconography of this subject seen in murals and showing Christ depicted twice, once in the upper part of the scene and again in the lower part of it. Christ Pantokrator is depicted enthroned and flanked by angels on the left and Apostles on the right, with St. Peter in the foreground (Figs. 334 and 574). Christ is depicted by exception again standing in a segment above, flanked by two angels.

In oikos 16, the Astounded Angels, reveals the figure of Christ Pantokrator, by exception depicted enthroned, surrounded by angels¹ (Figs. 331 and 600). In other cycles, he is depicted in a mandorla or substituted by Christ Emmanuel, enthroned or on the lap of the Virgin.

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, is illustrated with an enthroned Virgin with the Child, flanked by men clad in contemporary costume with the *skaranika*, beehive shaped hats² (Figs. 336 and 604). The closest iconography to this scene is found in the Cretan churches (Figs. 605-607). Even the rare detail of the box held by one of the orators, presumably containing writings, appears in it.

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, is painted with an Anastasis variant (Figs. 328 and 628). Only the left part of the scene has been preserved: Christ turns backwards in the direction of a standing angel, just as in the Cretan depictions of this oikos, which may reconstruct the missing part from Ochrid; they only differ in that the angel in Ochrid is clad in imperial garments with the *loros* (Figs. 629-630). The wish of God to save the world, mentioned in the first part of the text, is, thus, visualised with the Resurrection of Christ. An explanation of Christ's turning in the direction of the angels is that he wants to deliver Adam (and the righteous who have been saved) to the angels in Paradise, as noted above in examining this oikos in Roustika. This scene decorates more frequently this oikos than other ones, showing various subjects.

Oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, is illustrated with Christ enthroned and venerated by a group of saints on the right; the group on the left has not been preserved (Figs. 331 and 655). The artist follows the current iconography for this stanza, in which the groups of people flanking Christ vary.

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 18 note 97, figs. 77a-b.

² Pätzold, *Akathistos*, fig. 78a-b.

³ Grozdanov, *Akathistos*, 44, scheme on p. 46, fig. 4. *Idem*, *Ochrid*, sch. 31, fig. 92. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 31-32, fig. 79.

¹ Grozdanov, *Akathistos*, 45, scheme on p. 46, fig. 6. *Idem*, *Ochrid*, sch. 31. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, figs. 79a-b.

² Grozdanov, *Akathistos*, 44-45, scheme on p. 46, fig. 7. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 34-35, figs. 80a-b.

Oikos 21, comparing the Virgin to a lamp shining to those in darkness, is illustrated with the asymmetrical type of decorating this scene (Figs. 331 and 670). The Virgin, holding the Child, is depicted on the left within a fiery mandorla. She turns in the direction of a group of men placed in a cave. A similar composition is found in Roustika and Meronas, the Skopelos icon and the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 662, 664 and 671). The other type of decorating this stanza reveals a symmetrical composition with the Virgin in the middle, flanked by two groups of men in a dark cave; it appears in Elasson, Matejče, Marko, Valsamonero and the Uspenskij icon in Moscow (Figs. 663, 665-666 and 668-669).

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is decorated with the iconographic type that is inspired on the last words of this oikos. Christ is depicted standing in a frontal attitude, tearing a scroll in the middle (Figs. 331 and 679). He is flanked by two groups of figures in proskynesis; the first figures of the group on the right possibly represent Adam and Eve, as seen in Valsamonero and probably in Meronas, which are of the same iconographic type (Figs. 58, 680 and 682). The forefathers appear in this scene not only because they symbolise all mankind to be saved, but also because the *cheirophon* alludes to the 'contract' that God drew up with Adam, as already observed above in examining this oikos in Valsamonero. The scenes in Roustika, Marko and Matejče (the latter exposing an asymmetrical arrangement of the figures) are also of a similar iconographic type, revealing Christ tearing the *cheirophon* (Figs. 22, 109, 132, 676-677 and 681). The other main type of decorating this stanza is inspired by the Anastasis scene and appears in the Tomič Psalter, the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons, and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 683-686).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, reveals the iconographic type showing the Virgin enthroned with the Child and flanked by two groups of cantors (Figs. 337 and 689). The group on the left is led by a bishop, and that on the right by the choirmaster making a musical gesture. All cantors wear white *skaranika*. The closest parallels to this scene are found in Crete (Figs. 689-693). The building with the cupola behind the Virgin recalls that seen in Vori (Figs. 35 and 692). Another variant of this stanza is seen in Elasson, Marko and Cozia, revealing the exaltation of the icon of the Virgin and including an emperor (Figs. 78, 193, 146 and 697-698).

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, shows the Virgin standing in prayer in front of a large drapery¹ (Figs. 337 and 702). Two men holding candelabras flank her. Cantors can be seen behind the man on the left, but the figures on the right are not preserved. A similar iconography is found in Valsamonero and Vori, where also the large veil in the background and the *lampadarioi* appear (Figs.

¹ Grozdanov, Akatist, scheme on p. 46, fig. 11. *Idem*, Ohrid, sch. 31. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 42, figs. 83a-b. Moran, *Singers*, 106-107, fig. 69.

60, 36 and 703-704). Most of the cycles are, however, illustrated with a variant showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin (Figs. 706-715).

St. Demetrius, Marko

The Akathistos cycle in the church of St. Demetrius in the Marko Monastery (1376-1381) begins in the southern part of the half cylinder of the apse, continues on the southern wall, then on the northern wall and ends in the northern part of the half cylinder of the apse.¹ The paintings are of a high artistic quality and in a good state of preservation.

Stanza 1, the first Annunciation scene, shows the Virgin standing on a cushion in front of a backless seat (Fig. 112). The Archangel Gabriel approaches her with wide steps, but is curiously depicted on a low pedestal. The rich, baroque architectonic background, a stylistic feature of this cycle, includes a low baldachin.

Stanza 2, the second Annunciation scene, reveals the Virgin sitting on a wooden throne (Fig. 113). She addresses the angel, who is here clad in imperial garments with the *loros*, and holds a staff ending in a cross decorated with pearls.

Stanza 3 is decorated with the Annunciation at the Well, the latter having the shape of a cross (Fig. 114). The Virgin holds the rope of the bucket that she has thrown into the well and does not pay any attention to the angel. The latter is depicted as a half figure, flying towards the Virgin. It is already mentioned that a flying angel fits better the text of the first stanza, in which it is stated that he was sent from heaven. It consequently decorates stanza 1, e.g., in Cozia and in the Uspenskij icon, as we shall see (Figs. 255, 279, 355 and 357).

Stanza 4, the Conception of Christ, shows the Virgin sitting on a large bench and spinning with stretched arms (Fig. 115). Two maidens hold a large veil spread behind her seat, symbolising *the power of the All-highest* that overshadowed her, as mentioned in the text of this stanza. Three large beams of light descend in her direction.

Stanza 5, the Visitation, depicting the Virgin taller than Elisabeth, does not reveal any particularities (Fig. 116).

Stanza 6, the Doubts of Joseph, shows the Virgin raising her hand exceptionally high in protest against the accusations of Joseph (Fig. 116).

¹ Grozdanov, Marko, 37-42, with a summary in French. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 15-16, plans 24-29, figs. 84-114, with bibliography. Babić, *Akathiste*, 302-339. Djurić, *Fresken*, 119-124, 279-281 note 105, with extensive bibliography.

In stanza 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, the shepherds are curiously omitted from the Nativity scene, which means that the artist did not pay attention to the text but copied an arbitrary scene (Fig. 117). He included, on the contrary, the three Magi on foot in the scene, although they are not mentioned in the text and although the next three stanzas are devoted to them. The three Magi, but on horseback, are also included in this stanza in the church of St. Nicholas *Orphanos* in Thessaloniki (Figs. 80 and 450).

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, depicts all three Magi pointing to an angel with spread wings on horseback, who shows them the way (Fig. 118). This is a rare iconographic feature and appears again only in Dečani and the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 91, 223, 474 and 481).

In stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, an angel introduces the Magi to the enthroned Virgin with the Child, depicted in front of an architectonic setting (Fig. 119). The angel, a rare addition to this scene, also appears in St. Nicholas *Orphanos*, Dečani and the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 81, 91, 224 and 487-490).

Stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, is decorated in a unique iconography, in which the Magi are missing (Fig. 120). A groom, holding the reins of three horses, leads them to three men standing in front of the gate of a city; they are clad in peculiar, 'eastern' garments. The groom with the horses occasionally appears in the story of the Three Magi, but the absence of the latter is difficult to explain. The scene may be interpreted as illustrating the last verse of this stanza, as Pätzold suggested, in which one reads that the Magi *abandoned Herod as a fool not knowing how to sing "Alleluia"*.¹ Although Herod is usually represented enthroned in Byzantine imperial garments and accompanied by a guard in military costume, the interpretation of Pätzold should be accepted as a possibility, not only because there is not a more convincing one, but also because the gesture of the first figure denotes a surprise rather than a salutation.

Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, is painted in a unique iconography² (Figs. 121 and 518). The tiny figure of a child, clad in a short white tunic and holding a basket, leads the group not to the city but to an architectural construction in the lower right corner of the scene by pointing to it. This possibly suggests the temple in Sotinen, called Capitol of Egypt, where, when the Virgin and the Child entered it, 365 idols prostrated themselves and shattered in pieces.³ The Virgin without the Child rides on a pack animal, followed by two camels, which is a peculiar addition to the scene. The artist also innovated by showing Joseph with

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 25-26, fig. 93.

² Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 26-27, figs. 93-94a-b.

³ This story is written in the *Liber de Infantia* or Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, 22-23, which narrates more miracles by Christ during the journey in Egypt. An English translation by Elliott, *Apocryphal N.T.*, 96

the Child on his shoulders behind a hill and by adding three female servants to the scene. The personification of Egypt wearing a crown and three women appear in front of the gates of a fortified city, painted in the upper right corner. No falling idols are seen on the ramparts of the city, possibly because the poles on the roof of the temple in the lower right corner allude to them.

Stanza 12, decorated with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, reveals the Child in the hands of the Virgin, willingly extending his hands in the direction of Simeon (Figs. 122 and 541). This is also the case in Matejče (Figs. 101 and 540). In other representations it shows fear for Simeon. The text of this stanza would be more accurately decorated if the Child were in the hands of Simeon.

Stanza 13, the New Creation, is illustrated with a scene inspired by the first part of the text of this *oikos* and shows Christ alone, the *new creation*, venerated by several men. He is depicted standing on a low pedestal in the middle of the scene and blessing in the direction of two groups of saints flanking him (Figs. 123 and 554). That on the left shows the Apostles, as the portraits of St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Mark suggest. The group on the right reveals monastic saints. Christ is shown enthroned in a similar composition in the Panagia *ton Chalkeon* in Thessaloniki (Figs. 304 and 553). He is substituted by Christ Emmanuel in Dečani and Matejče (Figs. 102 and 556-557); he is depicted enthroned in the former church and standing in the latter. The other type of decoration of this stanza reveals the Virgin with the Child, flanked by various groups of men, who fit better the text because also the Virgin is mentioned in it (Figs. 544-552).

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, is decorated with a deviating iconography (Figs. 124 and 567). The Virgin with the Child is represented enthroned on the left and venerated by a group of angels approaching from the right; a seraph is depicted above the head of the Virgin. This picture is not explained by the text. One cannot even assert that it was interchanged with that in stanza 16, the Astounded Angels,¹ because the latter is correctly decorated with angels surrounding Christ (Fig. 126).

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is decorated with the current iconography of this subject found in murals. Christ is depicted twice, once in the upper part of the scene and again in the lower part of it (Fig. 125). The bust of Christ Pantokrator is depicted in the upper part of the scene in a blue medallion carried by two seraphs. Christ Emmanuel is depicted standing in the lower part of the scene and flanked by bishops, among whom St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus. The blue beam connecting the two figures of Christ denotes that they are of the same substance.

Stanza 16, the Astounded Angels, displays Christ sitting in a mandorla and blessing with his outstretched hands; the mandorla is borne by four angels (Figs.

¹ In Roustika and Meronas stanza 14 has been interchanged with stanza 16, as a result of which the former is now decorated with angels venerating Christ (Figs. 556-557).

126 and 601). This composition recalls Christ from the Ascension scene. A similar but not identical scene decorates this stanza in Cozia (Figs. 142 and 602). These and other similar scenes, especially when a mandorla appears, are inspired by the words of this stanza which characterise Christ as *unapproachable as God* (Figs. 596-603). Another type, showing the Child with the Virgin, is inspired by the words of this stanza which describe Christ as *a man approachable by all* (Figs. 589-595).

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, is illustrated with a standing Virgin holding the blessing Child (Figs. 125 and 617). The latter is placed in an octagonal star in front of her chest. Orators flank the Virgin, clad in richly decorated belted robes and wearing checked beehive shaped hats, the *skaranikon*; one of them wears a large *skiadion*. They hold unfurled scrolls in their hanging left hand and pens in the raised right one. The two foremost figures also carry penholders. The closest parallels to this scene, but less sumptuous, are seen in Dečani and Cozia (Figs. 143, 317, 616 and 618).

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, is painted with the most complete Anastasis scene, if one compares it to the variants of this scene which mostly decorate this stanza elsewhere. It belongs to the iconographic type that shows Christ pulling both Adam and Eve out of their sarcophagi (Figs. 128 and 627). The wish of God to save the world, mentioned in the first part of the text, is represented with the Anastasis scene, while it is elsewhere visualised with various subjects (Figs. 619-632).

Stanza 19, the Defence of Virgins, is decorated with a Virgin with the Child, standing in front of a kind of tent in red, which emphasises her role as protector (Fig. 129 and 638). Female saints flank her with haloes in various colours, which is also a characteristic of this artist. Two of them are clad in imperial garments and may be identified as St. Catherine and St. Irene.

Stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, is illustrated with the figure of Christ Pantokrator enthroned in front of an exedra (Figs. 130 and 647). Angels on the left and bishops on the right flank him. The three bishops, whose head is fully visible, can be identified as St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. John Chrysostom; the head of the latter is partially damaged. The appearance of angels in this stanza is unique; angels appear in the description of the decoration of this stanza in the *Hermeneia*,¹ but they surround Christ enthroned in the sky, while bishops and other saints are depicted below. The angels are replaced in other cycles by a group of believers who offer their odes to Christ, here represented by bishops. In a few other cases, the Virgin or her icon replace Christ in the middle, by which the text is rendered less accurately because this stanza is addressed to Christ.

Stanza 21, comparing the Virgin to a shining lamp, is illustrated with the symmetrical type decorating this stanza (Figs. 131 and 668). The Virgin is depicted standing and holding the blessing Child in front of her. A candle protrudes above her head, designating her *as a lamp full of light*. Two groups of Apostles flank her in a supplication attitude; all figures are placed in front of a cave. Those in darkness, led towards divine understanding, mentioned in the text of this stanza, are identified here as Apostles. This is also the case in Matejče (Figs. 108 and 666).

Stanza 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is decorated with the figure of Christ placed in front of an aedicle and tearing the scroll which he holds in an almost horizontal position (Figs. 132 and 677). The group on the right represents the Apostles. That on the left is partially damaged, but the priestly attire in which two of the men are clad, suggests that it consists of figures from the Old Testament. This symmetrical arrangement of the figures also appears in Meronas, Roustika, Valsamonero and Ochrid¹ (Figs. 679-682). The latter two even include the figure of Adam, to whom the tearing of the *cheirophon* alludes. The two groups flanking Christ in Marko are, therefore, less carefully chosen than in the cycles mentioned above. The other main type of decorating this stanza is inspired by the Anastasis scene and appears in the Tomič Psalter, the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons, and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 683-686).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is illustrated with a sumptuous liturgical scene showing the icon of the Virgin *Eleousa* carried in procession (Figs. 133 and 698). It is borne on the shoulders of a bearded man, whose body is covered by a *podea*, richly decorated by double headed eagles. A deacon holding a censer and a *hexapterygon* standard precedes the icon. A young emperor is depicted on the left, clad in full imperial attire of the Paleologan era. Three monks, two of whom are clad in elaborate garments follow; nuns and a deacon holding a labarum are visible above them; a group of bishops closes the procession.² The placing of the monks in front of the bishops may be explained by the fact that the painting was made for a monastery. Pätzold summarised the various opinions on the identification of this emperor as, among others, Heraclius, Dušan, Uroš and even John II Comnenus (1118-1143); she also referred to the various views about the ceremony that was possibly copied here.³ I certainly do not wish to add another hypothetical identification for this portrait. As regards the ceremony depicted here, that of the Akathistos in the presence of a Byzantine or a Serbian ruler is the most probable one. A similar iconography for stanza 23 is seen in Elason, where it is badly preserved, and in Cozia (Figs. 78, 146 and 697). Another variant for the illustration of this stanza, which

¹ Grozdanov, Akatist, 47, scheme on p. 46, fig. 9. *Idem*, Ohrid, sch. 31, fig. 95.

² The bishops are depicted around the corner behind the monks and are not visible in my reproductions but in Pätzold, *Akathistos*, fig. 111.

³ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 40-41 and 71, figs. 111-113 and 71 ff.

¹ *Hermeneia*, 149-150; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

appears more often than that discussed here, shows the Virgin instead of her icon (Figs. 687-696).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is lavishly decorated with the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria placed on a stand and covered with a richly embroidered *podea*¹ (Figs. 134 and 709). The icon is supported by a youth on the left. The group on the right consists of clerics. The first bishop holds a bejewelled 'patriarchal' cross and has the facial features of St. John the Eleemon; the second bishop holds a book and has a headgear similar to that worn by St. Clemens of Alexandria. The bust of a deacon with the *orarion* is visible behind the bishops. Three cantors in richly decorated robes and *skiadia* lead the choir on the left. All three make musical gestures. A novice in yellow in the foreground holds a candle and a second one in white behind him reads in an open book. A similar iconography including an icon is applied, e.g., in Elasson, Dečani, Matejče, the Synodal Akathistos, the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons (Figs. 706-715). Another variant shows the Virgin instead of her icon venerated; it is found in Crete, Ochrid and Cozia (Figs. 701-705).

Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia

The Akathistos cycle in Cozia, Valachia, is painted on the eastern wall of the narthex of the Katholikon dedicated to the Holy Trinity and is dated to ca. 1390 A.D.²

Stanza 1 is decorated with the Annunciation at the Well³ (Figs. 135 and 355). The Virgin is depicted standing next to the well and holding the rope of the bucket. An angel descends flying from a blue segment in her direction. A flying angel fits better the text of this stanza, in which it is mentioned that the angel was sent from heaven, as already noted. He also decorates stanza 1 in a few other cycles, e.g., the Tomič and the Serbian Plasters, showing a sitting Virgin (Figs. 192, 216 and 352-353).

¹ Babić, Akathiste, fig. 14. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 42-43, 66, fig. 114. Moran, *Singers*, 107-108, figs. VIII and 70.

² Babić, G., "L'iconographie constantino-politaine de l'Akathiste de la Vierge à Cozia (Valachie)," *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloskog Instituta (Recueil des Travaux de l'Institut d'Études Byzantines)*, 14-15 (1973), 173-189, figs. 1-4 and 7-8, with bibliography. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 655, *passim*, figs. 4-7. Barbu, Daniel, *Pictura murala din Tara Romanesca in secolul al XIV-lea (The mural painting of Valachia in the XIVth century)*, Bucharest, 1986, 58 and 60 (kindly communicated to me by Prof. Corina Popa, Bucharest).

³ Babić, Akathiste, 174. Ștefănescu, *Valachie*, Album, pl. 15.

In stanza 2, the second Annunciation scene of the cycle, the angel holds a staff and outstretches his hand in the direction of the Virgin, whom he approaches with wide steps (Figs. 135 and 377). The Virgin stands on a low pedestal and addresses the angel.

Stanza 3, the last Annunciation scene, shows the angel standing and the Virgin gesticulating slightly stronger than in the previous scene (Figs. 136 and 390).

Stanza 4, the Conception of Christ, is decorated with a remarkable iconography¹ (Figs. 136 and 405). A blue segment is painted in the upper part of the scene, from which three beams of light descend; the middle beam is connected to a blue mandorla, in which the Virgin is portrayed standing. This scene successfully visualises that the *Power of the All-highest* came from heaven and *overshadowed her*, as mentioned in the text of this stanza. A similar iconography, but with the addition of the Child on the chest of the Virgin, is seen in the Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon, about which more below in examining these cycles (Figs. 195, 237 and 407-408). Most of the artists of this stanza visualised the Power of the All-highest with a veil behind the enthroned Virgin, held either by maidens or sometimes by angels (Figs. 409-419).

Stanza 5, the Visitation scene, shows the Virgin and Elisabeth approaching each other with wide steps (Figs. 137 and 430), a motion that is not always visible in other cycles, e.g., in Roustika (Figs. 5 and 428).

Stanza 6, the Doubts of Joseph, reveals a unique iconographic feature (Figs. 137 and 433). Joseph is not only depicted reproaching the Virgin, but also sitting in a pensive pose in front of an edifice. Lafontaine-Dosogne thought that this is the most accurate rendering of the text of this stanza by showing first Joseph deepened in his doubts and then conversing with the Virgin.² An accurate rendering of the text would, however, demand acceptance of the conception of the Virgin from the side of Joseph; this is clearly stated at the end of this stanza,³ and this is also the meaning of this oikos. The posture of Joseph and especially that of the Virgin, turning her back to him, do not suggest this.

Stanza 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is illustrated with a Nativity scene, which includes a pensive Joseph and the Bathing of the Child by two maidens (Figs. 138 and 458). Three shepherds approach the reclining Virgin on a mattress and the Infant in the manger; their presence in the scene is, however, not sufficiently emphasised because of their small size.

¹ Babić, *Akathiste*, 175, 181-182, fig. 1. Lafontaine-Dosogne, 655, *passim*, figs. 4-7, esp. 675, fig. 4.

² Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 678-679, fig. 5. Babić, *Akathiste*, 175, fig. 2.

³ *But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia."*

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, shows the Magi on horseback in front of a mountainous landscape making various gestures, as the current iconography of the subject requires (Figs. 138 and 469).

Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, follows the prevalent iconography of the theme by depicting the Magi on foot while offering their gifts to the enthroned Virgin with the Child (Figs. 139 and 494). The scene is placed in front of a rocky landscape, which is also seen in Valsamonero (Figs. 45 and 496).

In stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, the half figure of a flying angel has been added in the upper part of the scene (Figs. 139 and 502). He leads the three Magi shown on horseback; no city has been depicted. An angel leading the Magi to Babylon is also seen in Valsamonero (Figs. 46 and 501). This rare iconographic detail is taken from stanza 8, showing the Journey of the Magi, as seen in Roustika and Meronas (Figs. 8 and 29). The appearance of the angel in stanza 10 may be, as already mentioned above, an allusion to Matthew, 2:12, who states that the Magi were warned by God in a dream to avoid Herod, and that they returned to their country by another way. The last verse of this stanza also mentions that the Magi *abandoned Herod as a fool*.

Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, belongs to the iconographic type that shows the Virgin carrying the Child (Figs. 140 and 521). James precedes and Joseph follows. The personification of Egypt wearing a crown welcomes the procession from the ramparts of the city, instead from its entrance.

Stanza 12, decorated with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, shows Simeon holding the Child in an asymmetrical composition (Figs. 140 and 531). Joseph is depicted behind the Virgin, and between their heads one may distinguish a section of a halo belonging to the Prophetess Anna.

In stanza 13, the New Creation, the Virgin is exceptionally depicted standing in the middle of the scene (Figs. 141 and 552). She holds the Child in a rhomboid and is flanked by Old Testament kings and priests. In other cycles decorated with this iconographic type, the Virgin is depicted seated.

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, deviates from the iconography seen in other cycles (Figs. 141 and 566). It is decorated with a standing Virgin holding Christ in a rhomboid, similar to the previous stanza; standing monks venerate her. Other artists usually emphasise the figure of Christ, to whom this stanza is devoted, or decorate this stanza with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 559-565 and 569-572).

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, also reveals a unique, but inaccurate, iconography (Figs. 142 and 586). Christ is depicted in a mandorla in the middle of the scene. He is flanked by two groups of angels emerging from two segments painted in the upper corners of the scene.¹ The correct iconography for this stanza shows Christ depicted twice, by which the double nature of Christ is

visualised: once in the upper part of the scene and again in the lower part of it (Figs. 574-585).

In stanza 16, the Astounded Angels, two groups of standing angels raise Christ sitting in a mandorla (Figs. 142 and 602). This is a similar but not identical iconography to that seen in Marko, in which Christ in a mandorla is raised by four angels, as seen in Ascension scenes (Figs. 126 and 601). These and other similar scenes, especially when a mandorla appears, are inspired by the words of this stanza which characterise Christ as *unapproachable as God*, while another type, showing the Child in the arms of the Virgin, is inspired by the words of this oikos which describe Christ as *a man approachable by all* (Figs. 592-603).

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, is painted with a standing Virgin holding the blessing Child, the latter placed in a rhomboid in front of her chest (Figs. 143 and 616). Orators flank the Virgin; the headgears of a few men resemble crowns, but they may not be identified as emperors, if one compares them to the imperial figure depicted in stanza 23 of this cycle (Fig. 146). The figure of the Virgin is very similar to that seen in Marko (Figs. 127 and 617). In most representations of this stanza the Virgin is depicted enthroned (Figs. 604-615).

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, is adorned with a standing Christ, who outstretches both hands in a protective gesture (Figs. 143 and 622). He is flanked by two groups of men; those on the left wear similar crowns to the orators appearing in the scene decorating the previous stanza. The group on the right includes a figure in contemporary imperial costume, which is a unique case among the decoration of this stanza in other cycles. This scene may be interpreted as illustrating the words of this oikos mentioning that Christ *came among us*, in order to save the world. The figure of Christ Pantokrator flanked by two groups of believers also decorates this stanza in the church of the Apostles in Kalamata.¹ This is a less frequent type of illustrating this stanza than that showing an Anastasis variant (Figs. 626-630).

Stanza 19, praising the Virgin as the defence of virgins, is as usual decorated with a standing Virgin flanked by two groups of female figures (Figs. 144 and 636). These figures are not identified as saints by means of a halo, which is the case in other cycles, e.g., in Marko, Roustika and Valsamonero (Figs. 19, 55, 129, 638 and 643-644). Secular female figures also flank the Virgin in Elasson (Figs. 77 and 634).

Stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, is illustrated with the Virgin, without the Child, standing on a low pedestal in the middle of the scene (Figs. 144 and 666). She is flanked by men wearing *skaranika* and *skiadia* headgears, the latter definitely cantors.² The appearance of the Virgin in this stanza is exceptional, but

¹ Babić, Akathiste, 176-177, figs. 1 and 8.

¹ Kalokyris, *Messenia*, 39, pl.13b. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 93-94.

² Babić, Akathiste, 178, fig. 3. Moran, *Singers*, 108-109.

inaccurate, because this stanza is addressed to Christ. The Virgin also appears in Dečani and Matejče, but her figure is substituted by the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* (Figs. 88, 107 and 657). In the other, more correct, iconographic type, various groups of people venerate Christ (Figs. 645-655).

Stanza 21, comparing the Virgin to a lamp shining to those in darkness, is decorated with a rare scene, showing the Virgin alone holding a huge, lighted candle (Figs. 145 and 659). The only parallel to this iconographic type is found in Dečani¹ (Figs. 320 and 667), while the customary decoration of this scene includes one or two groups of men in a dark cave (Figs. 661-666 and 668-671).

Stanza 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is exceptionally decorated with the figure of Christ, again alone, while tearing the *cheirophon*, a parchment (Figs. 145 and 674). He is also represented alone in Dečani.² This type of decoration is the closest to that described in the *Hermeneia*, according to which Christ stands among houses and tears the *cheirophon* of Adam.³ Christ is flanked by two groups of figures in other cycles, e.g., in Ochrid, Valsamonero, Roustika and Meronas (Figs. 679-682). The other main type of decorating this stanza shows variants of the Anastasis scene and appears in the Tomič Psalter, the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons, and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 683-686).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is illustrated with a liturgical scene (Figs. 146 and 697). The icon of the Virgin with the Child is placed on a stand and flanked on the left by an emperor and his dignitaries, and on the right by monks.⁴ The figure on the left bears the sword of the emperor and may be identified as the *megas domestikos*.⁵ He is clad, like the other courtiers, in a long robe, the *kabbadion*, and wears a headgear, the *skaranikon*, decorated with a bust, supposedly of the emperor. The icon is supported by two unidentifiable figures. The *podea* of the icon is embroidered with the figure of an emperor in an attitude of prayer. The veneration of an icon also decorates this stanza in Ellasson, where it is badly preserved,⁶ and in Marko, revealing a sumptuous

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 38, fig. 47.

² Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 39-40, figs. 48a-b.

³ *Hermeneia*, 150; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

⁴ Babić, *Akathiste*, 178-179, figs. 4 and 6.

⁵ Ps.-Kodinos, *Traité des offices*, ed. J. Verpeaux, Paris, 1966, 168, 1-3, 190, 19-21, 190, 5-8, 234, 18-19, mentions that the sword of the emperor was borne by the *megas domestikos*; when he was absent this duty was taken over by the *protostrator* (168, 1-3); when the *protostrator* was not present, by the *parakeimomenos tes sphendones* (176, 3-5), and when the latter was also absent, by the *parakeimomenos tou koltonos* (176, 12-14). Another depiction of an official holding the sword of an emperor, namely of John VI Kantakouzenos, appears behind this emperor shown presiding at the Council of 1351 A.D. in the miniature of Par. gr. 1242, fol. 5vo, dated 1375 A.D. He wears, however a *skladion* and not a *skaranikon* headgear: Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 134, fig. 86.

⁶ Constantinides, *Ellasson*, 162, pls. 86c and 92c in colour. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 40, fig. 28. Moran, *Singers*, 105, *passim*, pl. VI, in colour (detail of the heads of two cantors with *skladia*).

procession (Figs. 78, 133 and 698). Another, more frequent, variant shows the Virgin instead of her icon lauded by mainly cantors (Figs. 687-696).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is decorated with a standing Virgin holding the Child in a rhomboid in front of her chest and flanked by cantors and monks¹ (Figs. 147 and 705). She is painted in a mandorla. Various personages offer the Hymn in Ochrid, Valsamonero and Vori to a standing, but not in a mandorla, Virgin (Figs. 702-704), while a more frequent variant shows the veneration of the icon of the Virgin (Figs. 706-715).

¹ Babić, *Akathiste*, 179, fig. 4, identified the group on the left as noble laymen and that on the right as monks.

THE AKATHISTOS IN MANUSCRIPTS

Decorated Akathistos cycles have been preserved in the Greek manuscripts Synodal gr. 429 in the Historical Museum in Moscow and Escorial Codex R.I. 19, the Bulgarian Tomič Psalter, Codex Muz. 2752 in the Historical Museum of Moscow, and the Serbian Psalter, Codex Slav. 4 in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich.

The Synodal and the Escorial Manuscripts

The Akathistos cycles in Synodal gr. 429, datable ca. 1360 A.D.¹ and Escorial Codex R.I. 19, ca. 1400 A.D.² reveal an almost identical iconography. Several zoomorphic and ornithomorphic initials decorate the text. The miniatures for oikos 23 in the Synodal manuscript and for oikoi 23 and 24 in the Escorial manuscript are missing.

Proxorov identified the scribe of the Synodal manuscript as Joasaph of the Constantinopolitan Monastery *ton Hodegon*, active between 1355 and 1364;³ the Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos (1354-1355 and 1364-1376) would have compiled and commissioned the manuscript, about which more in examining oikos 20. Lixačeva, following Lazarev, compared the style of the Synodal Akathistos to

that seen in the Job MS Par. gr. 135, dated 1362.¹ This comparison is actually irrelevant, because the Paris manuscript has not much in common with the style of the Synodal Akathistos. The miniatures of oikoi 20 and 24, which include cantors, were also studied by Moran.² Fonkić established that the manuscript was donated in 1662 to Tsar Alexej Michailovič by the *epitropoi* of the church of the Theotokos Chrysopigi in Galata, Constantinople.³

Velmans placed the execution of the Escorial manuscript in Italy and considered it as a model for the Synodal Akathistos.⁴ The opposite is more probable, if one takes into consideration the earlier date assigned to the Synodal Akathistos. Andrés Martínez thought that the Escorial manuscript was executed on Mount Athos, but without convincing arguments. He considered the Escorial Akathistos as a direct or indirect copy of the Synodal Akathistos.⁵ Chatzidakis considered it a typical Cretan work from the fifteenth century.⁶ Vasilaki ascribed it to Constantinopolitan painters working in the beginning of the fifteenth century in Crete.⁷ I should like to remark that there is no clear evidence that would help one to establish with certainty the place of execution of this manuscript.

Oikos 1, the first Annunciation scene, reveals the archangel Gabriel holding a staff and addressing the Virgin (Figs. 148, 170, 365 and 367). The latter is shown sitting in an antithetical position of the body on a bench and spinning. The dove descending from a segment is visible in the Escorial manuscript. The two figures are identical in almost every detail in both manuscripts, and this is also true for the architectonic background.

In oikos 2, the second Annunciation scene, the Virgin turns her body in the direction of the angel and raises her right hand, expressing thus her doubts on the words of the angel (Figs. 149, 171, 374 and 376). The body of the angel is thicker but the figure of the Virgin more elegant in the Synodal manuscript.

Oikos 3, the last Annunciation scene, displays the Virgin in a similar stance to that in the previous oikos, except for the left hand that does not hold the spindle

¹ Parchment, 78 fols., 240x175 mm. On the Synodal Akathistos see, among others, Treneff, D.K., *Copies photographiques des miniatures des manuscrits grecs conservés à la Bibliothèque Synodale, autrefois Patriarcale de Moscou*, Moscow, 1862, pls. 1-26. Strzygowski, *Serbische Psalter*, 128-133. Lixačeva, V.D., "The Illumination of the Greek Manuscript of the *Akathistos* Hymn (Moscow, State Historical Museum, *Synodal gr. 429*)," *D.O.P.*, 26 (1972), 254-262, figs. 1-3 (oikoi 5, 9 and 14), with the earlier bibliography. Colour reproductions of the Synodal Akathistos are also reproduced by Likhachova, V.D., *Byzantine Miniature*, Moscow, 1977, pls. 44a-49 (stanzas 11, prooimion, 20, 2, 5 and 9), with bibliography. Moran, *Singers*, 97-102, figs. 60-62.

² Parchment, fols. 75, 245x182 mm. The Akathistos appears on fols. 1-32, fols. 29-31 are missing and with those the illustrations for oikoi 23 and 24. Velmans, T., "Une illustration inédite de l'Akathiste et l'iconographie des hymnes liturgiques à Byzance," *CahArch*, 22 (1972), 131-165. Andrés Martínez, G. de, *El Himno Akathistos, Ms. Esc. R.I. 19*, 2 vols., Madrid, 1981, facsimile edition with commentary. Moran, *Singers*, 97-102, fig. 63.

³ Proxorov, G.M., "A Codicological Analysis of the Illuminated *Akathistos* to the Virgin (Moscow, State Historical Museum, *Synodal gr. 429*)," *D.O.P.*, 26 (1972), 237-252.

¹ Lixačeva, *Akathistos*, 256-257, note 18, 260-261.

² Moran, *Singers*, 97-102, figs. 60-61.

³ Fonkić, B.L., in the Catalogue of the Exhibition *Greek Documents and Manuscripts, Icons and Applied Art Objects from Moscow Depositories, The International Conference "Crete, East Mediterranean and Russia in 17th c."*, Moscow, 1995, no. 67 (the Akathistos, fols. 3vo-4ro, the Annunciation in colour) and no. 69 (the document that accompanied the manuscript).

⁴ Velmans, *Akathiste*, 136-137.

⁵ Andrés Martínez, *Akathistos*, 27, 35, 69 and 80.

⁶ Chatzidakis, M., *Les débuts de l'école crétoise et la question de l'école dite italo-grecque, In memoria di Sofia Antoniadis* (Biblioteca dell'Istituto Ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 6), Venice, 1974, 169-211; reprinted in *idem, Études sur la peinture postbyzantine*, London, 1976, essay no. IV, 198, pl. XXVI.2.

⁷ Βασιλάκη, Μ., "Παρατηρήσεις για τη ζωγραφική στην Κρήτη τον πρώιμο 15ο αιώνα," in *Ευφρόσυνον. Αφιέρωμα στον Μανόλη Χατζηδάκη*, Athens, 1991, I, 65-76, with a summary in English on pp. 76-77, esp. 71-73, pl. 21a (oikos 11).

any more (Figs. 150, 172, 397 and 399). The angel shows more motion, as if singing the salutations which follow this stanza. The peculiar drapery on the architectonic setting in the background is again almost identical.

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ,¹ reveals a unique iconography in comparison to the decoration of this stanza in other cycles (Figs. 151, 173, 404 and 406). In both manuscripts, the Virgin is portrayed standing with raised hands in front of an identical architectonic setting. The Power of the All-highest that overshadowed the Virgin, mentioned in this stanza, is represented in the form of three beams descending from a segment in gradations of blue; the beam in the middle ends in a disk, from which one beam in the Synodal and three beams in the Escorial manuscript descend in the direction of the Virgin. This type represents an earlier stage of the evolution of the iconography of this stanza than that seen in Cozia, where the figure of the Virgin is surrounded by a blue mandorla (Figs. 136 and 405).

Oikos 5, the Visitation, shows the Virgin and Elisabeth embracing each other in an identical stance in both manuscripts, but in different colours of garments (Figs. 152 and 174). Two towers appear on the wall of the background in the Synodal, but three in the Escorial manuscript, because the miniature in the latter manuscript is wider.

Oikos 6, the Doubts of Joseph, reveals considerable emotion, especially in the figure of Joseph, who raises his hands in despair in front of the Virgin (Figs. 153 and 175). The linear perspective in the upper part of the symmetrically arranged architectonic elements in the background is better in the Synodal than in the Escorial manuscript.

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 153, 175 and 453-454). The Virgin is seated in the entrance of the cave, holds the Infant in her arms and bends her head close to it; Joseph is depicted in the lower right corner of the scene. The shepherds pay more attention to the angels than to Christ, by which the first part of the text is visualised: *The shepherds heard the angels singing of the incarnate presence of Christ.*

Oikos 8, the Journey of the Magi, shows the Magi ascending a mountain in the direction of the star of Bethlehem (Figs. 157, 177, 468 and 470). They show more motion than in the other cycles and, in the better preserved miniature in Escorial, one may also perceive the decorative details of the saddles and the bright colours of the scene.

Oikos 9, the Adoration of the Magi, displays a singular iconography in both manuscripts (Figs. 158, 178, 495 and 497). The Magi, wearing peculiar crowns, approach on foot the Nativity cave; the Virgin with Christ on her knee is depicted

¹ Velmans, Acatiste, 141, fig. 6. Lafontaine Dosogne, 674, fig. 12. Andrés Martínez, *Akathistos*, 78-79, with a facsimile in colour.

sitting in the entrance of the cave. In other representations, the Virgin is shown enthroned with Christ in her hands (Figs. 483-494).

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, is illustrated with a very unusual iconography (Figs. 155, 179, 507 and 509). The first Magus enters a comparatively large city while turning his head in the direction of the other two Magi, who follow him. A similar but not identical scene decorates this oikos in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 241 and 508). Most of the other cycles show the Magi on horseback approaching the city of Babylon (Figs. 501, 503-506).

Oikos 11 is decorated with a singular iconography instead of with the Flight into Egypt, seen in most Akathistos cycles (Figs. 159, 181 and 526-527). Both manuscripts show the Virgin without the Child standing in front of a city, from the walls of which the idols fall; two men are depicted in the foreground. In the Escorial manuscript one can see beams of light extending from the half mandorla of the Virgin in the direction of Egypt. The artist added the mandorla to the Virgin in the thought that he illustrated better this oikos, the first words of which read: *By flashing the light of truth in Egypt.* He actually made a mistake, because he did not notice that it is the Saviour, whom he totally omitted from the picture, who flashed the light, as mentioned further on in the text. The purpose of the Synodal artist was actually to illustrate the last words of the oikos, *and those who were saved from them (the idols) cried to the mother of God: (chairetismoi follow);* the two men therefore praise the Virgin with appropriate gestures.

Oikos 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, shows a short version of the scene, in which the figures of Joseph and the Prophetess Anna have been excluded (Figs. 156, 180 and 529-530). Simeon holds the Child, as the text of this oikos requires, and seems to return it to the Virgin, who stands on the other side of the altar with outstretched hands in order to receive it. Christ turns his head to Simeon and outstretches his hand in the direction of the Virgin. A similar but not identical reduced iconography is found only in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 243 and 528).

Oikos 13, the New Creation, shows an asymmetrical arrangement of the figures in both manuscripts (Figs. 160, 182 and 545-546). The Virgin is frontally sitting in front of a semicircular construction in the right part of the picture; she presents the Child to a group of men depicted on the left. It illustrates the first words of this oikos, reading: *The Creator revealed a new creation, and showed it to us.*¹ The appearance of the Virgin in the scene also visualises the second half of the text of this oikos, in which the *womb without seed* is mentioned, in contrast to the other iconographic type of this oikos that shows only Christ (553-554 and 556-557). A similar asymmetrical arrangement of the figures also appears in the

¹ *The Creator revealed a new creation, and showed it to us, his creatures. He made it flourish from a womb without seed which he kept chaste, as it had been before, so that we might see the miracle and sing her praises, saying: (chairetismoi follow).*

Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 544 and 547), whereas other cycles reveal the Virgin symmetrically flanked by various people (Figs. 548-552).

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, is decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 161, 183, 559 and 561). It visualises the words of the text, *strange birth and the great God appeared on earth as a humble man*. The Virgin is depicted seated in the cave, while turning her head in the direction of the manger with the Infant, the ass and the ox. A group of men approach the cave and raise their hands in exaltation. This oikos is also decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 205, 229, 245, 560 and 562-563). This kind of decoration is a simple way of rendering the text of this oikos. In other cycles, the artists invented a new scene showing Christ Emmanuel or the Virgin surrounded by various figures, or even a more sophisticated one, seen in Ochrid and the Cretan churches (Figs. 564-572).

Oikos 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is illuminated in both manuscripts with only an enthroned Christ Pantokrator (Figs. 162, 184 and 587-588). This scene does not fully render the double nature of Christ, alluded to in the text. In other cycles, Christ is depicted twice, once in heaven, i.e., the upper part of the scene, and again on earth, in the lower part of the picture (Figs. 574-585).

Oikos 16, referring to angels astounded at the incarnation of Christ, shows Christ in both manuscripts standing in a mandorla with angular extensions¹ (Figs. 185 and 603). He is placed under an arch surrounded by venerating angels and a seraph painted at the top of the arch. The entire composition is different from that seen in the cycles which also reveal Christ in a mandorla (Figs. 599 and 601-602).

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, is exceptionally illuminated in both manuscripts with an enthroned Virgin without the Child (Figs. 163, 186, 611 and 613). The left group flanking the Virgin represents orators, clad in various contemporary costumes. The two foremost figures hold unfurled scrolls and with one hand their beard, a gesture expressing their amazement for the miraculous birth of Christ. On the right, one man is visible in the partially flaked miniature in the Synodal manuscript and three in the Escorial codex. They are clad in antique chiton and himation, representing the ancient philosophers, men of letters and disputants mentioned in the salutations following this oikos, in which even Athenians appear. A similar antique costume is also worn by the orators flanking the Virgin on the Skopelos icon; the Virgin, an enthroned *dexiokratousa*, differs (Figs. 247 and 609). This Virgin without the Child, seen in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, illustrates more accurately this oikos than the other cycles, showing the Virgin with the Child, because this oikos is addressed to the Virgin.

¹ Strzygowski, *Serbische Psalter*, 131, fol. 23ro. Velmans, Acathiste, fig. 18. Andrés Martínez, *Akathistos*, 82, with a facsimile reproduction in colour.

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, is better preserved in the Escorial manuscript than in the badly flaked miniature in the Synodal manuscript (Figs. 164, 187, 619 and 621). Christ is portrayed standing on the left and blessing in the direction of a group of men on the right. The scene takes place in front of an architectonic background, i.e., on earth, by which the words of this stanza, mentioning that Christ *came among us* in order to save the world, are better visualised. Another, more frequent type of decoration of this stanza, shows a variant of the Anastasis scene (Figs. 626-630).

Oikos 19, the Defence of Virgins, portrays the Virgin in both manuscripts seated on a backless, wooden throne¹ (Figs. 165, 188, 633 and 635). Maidens in colourful dresses flank her; a few of them have short leaves and *peploi* around the head, recalling classical figures. A few more cycles reveal maidens flanking the Virgin, while in other cycles they are substituted by saints (Figs. 636-644). The architectonic background in the Synodal and Escorial miniatures includes a low wall, which may be an allusion to the word *τείχος* (wall) in the Greek text of this oikos, translated here as *defence*.

Oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, is illustrated in both manuscripts with Christ standing in front of a baldachin (Figs. 168, 189, 649 and 651). Two bishops and four monks on the left and cantors on the right flank him. In a different iconographic type, it is the Virgin who is lauded by various groups of people. She is depicted standing in Cozia, without the Child (Figs. 144 and 656), and substituted by the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* in Dečani and Matejče (Figs. 88, 107 and 657). This type may be characterised as a less accurate way of illustrating the text, especially when the Virgin is represented without the Child, because it is Christ who is addressed in this stanza.

The first bishop in the Synodal manuscript has been identified by Prochorov as Philotheos Kokkinos, Metropolitan of Heraclea, and the second one as Kallistos I; the monk in the middle above them should represent the Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (1347-1354) as monk Joasaph; the beardless monk to the right of Kantakouzenos should represent Meletios, a Turkish disciple of the latter, who became a Christian monk and to whom Kantakouzenos addressed his apology against the Moslems.² In an earlier publication of mine, I reversed the identification of the bishops suggested by Prochorov, based on the portraits depicted in the miniature showing the Emperor John Kantakouzenos presiding the council of 1351 A.D. in the manuscript Par. gr. 1242: the first bishop should represent the Patriarch of Constantinople Kallistos I and the second one Philotheos Kokkinos.³ Moran added another feature in favour of this identification

¹ Velmans, Acathiste, 148, fig. 21. Andrés Martínez, *Akathistos*, 83, with a facsimile in colour.

² Prochorov, *Akathistos*, 249-252, fig. 7.

³ Spatharakis, I., *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Byzantina Neerlandica, 6), 1976, 137-138, figs. 86-92.

in the Synodal manuscript: the reddish hair of the second bishop fits Philotheos Kokkinos, *the Red*.¹ He also proposed that the figure gazing at Kantakouzenos possibly represented his wife, who took the name of Eugenia and retired to a convent after 1354; the grey-bearded chanter on the extreme right could represent the famous fourteenth-century composer Cucuzeles; the other cantors may also represent actual personages, especially the cantor who lacks his left hand.² Moran went on by characterising the scene as a real or imaged meeting of friends — the persons mentioned above — in the Great Lavra of Mount Athos; the miniature was, thus, originally created during the period 1355-1364 for another occasion and only later incorporated into the manuscript for Philotheos; a copy of this prototype survives in the Escorial manuscript; what we see in the Synodal manuscript is a copy commissioned by Philotheos during his last term of office (1364-1376) which was modified so as to reflect the contemporary situation.³

The conclusions of Moran, introduced as suggestions, are mainly reached by basing one supposition to the other. The rather romantic suggestion, that a scene was originally painted on the occasion of a real or imaged meeting of friends, was used to ascertain that this scene was incorporated into the manuscript for Philotheos Kokkinos. His theory that the second bishop in the Synodal miniature is clad in the patriarch's cloak and the first one is not, on which he based his conclusion that the Synodal miniature is a modified copy executed during the second term of office of Philotheos (1364-1376), is not true: In Byzantine art, several patterns have been used to form the crosses which decorate the *polystavrion phelonion*, theoretically a cape worn only by the patriarch of Constantinople, but in reality also seen in depictions of other bishops.

As regards the scene decorating this oikos in the Escorial manuscript, Moran explained the interchange of the costume of the two bishops by characterising this miniature as a copy of the prototype from which the Synodal miniature was also copied.⁴ In other words, the Escorial miniature is not a direct copy of the Synodal, but of a lost prototype. I should like to remark here, that a copying artist does not necessarily reproduces every detail of his model; he may change the colours and patterns of a costume and even the appearance of a figure; Moran knew very well that also the colours of the robes of the cantors are changed in the Escorial miniature. This does not, however, mean that the artist wanted to represent different cantors than in his model. I should like to remark that one

¹ Moran, *Singers*, 100-101.

² This cantor has a much longer sleeve than his hand. I should like to observe that this kind of sleeves also appear in other Byzantine representation; they do not necessarily indicate that the person wearing them lacks his hand.

³ Moran, *Singers*, 100-102.

⁴ Moran, *Singers*, 98-99, 102, fig. V.

must also consider the possibility than none of the figures in this oikos is a genuine portrait.

Oikos 21, the Shining Lamp, is illustrated in both manuscripts with a Virgin in a mandorla (Figs. 169, 190, 658 and 660); the mandorla is surrounded by angular extensions, one of which is painted in red. The Virgin presents a huge candle in the form of a column to a group of men standing in front of a hill. The gesture of the Virgin emphasises *the incorporeal flame (Christ)* of the text, which she 'lighted' *in order to lead every one towards divine understanding and illuminate the mind with brilliance*. The stress given to the candle by placing it independently is unique among other cycles. The scene belongs to the asymmetrical type of decorating this oikos, as seen in Roustika, Meronas, Ochrid, the Skopelos icon and the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 21, 212, 251, 662, 664, 670-671). It is closer to the last two scenes, but differs from them in that the candle is not held by the Virgin, but emphatically separated, and in that the group of men is not depicted in a cave, but in front of a hill. The other type of decorating this stanza reveals a symmetrical composition with the Virgin in the middle, flanked by two groups of people in a dark cave; it appears, in Elasson, Matejče, Marko, Valsamonero and in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 57, 71, 108, 131, 665-666 and 668-669).

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is decorated in both manuscripts with a different iconography to that seen in other cycles of the Akathistos (Figs. 191, 166, 673 and 675). Christ, shown outstretching his right hand and holding a tiny furled scroll in his left, hastens in the direction of a group of men; a wall is depicted in the background with a closed door in the middle.¹ The scroll, seen in other cycles, is not emphasised in this scene and one may, therefore, assume that the representation is inspired on the words of this oikos mentioning that Christ *came himself to live with the fugitives from his grace*. A second iconographic type illustrates better this oikos by showing Christ flanked by two groups of people and tearing up a parchment, the *cheirographon*, *our old debts* of the text. It appears in Meronas, Roustika, Valsamonero, Ochrid and other cycles (Figs. 674, 676-682). A third iconographic type shows a variant of the Anastasis scene; it appears in the Skopelos icon, the Tomič Psalter, the Uspenskij icon and St. Ferapont (Figs. 683-686).

Oikos 23 is missing in both manuscripts.

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is missing in the Escorial manuscript. The miniature in the Synodal manuscript is partially flaked (Figs. 167 and 706). It is decorated with a liturgical scene, showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria*, flanked by a group of clerics on the left and a group of cantors on the right. The clergy is clad in either white or red robes and high bonnets and

¹ Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 107, considered the possibility that the doors represent the gates of Hades.

the cantors in long robes and *skiadia* headgears. An almost identical iconography is applied in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, which also reveal the veneration of the icon of the Virgin by two similar groups (Figs. 707 and 712). Comparable compositions are also found in Ellasson, Dečani, the Marko Monastery, Matejče, the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 708-715). In another iconographic variant, it is the Virgin standing or enthroned who is venerated, instead of her icon; it appears in Crete, Ochrid and Cozia (Figs. 701-705).

The Tomič and the Serbian Psalters

The Bulgarian Tomič Psalter, Codex Muz. 2752 in the Historical Museum of Moscow, ascribed to ca. 1360 A.D.,¹ and the Serbian Psalter, Codex Slav. 4 in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, datable to the last quarter of the fourteenth century,² display a similar iconography in several stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn. The miniatures decorating stanzas 19-23 have not been preserved in the Serbian Psalter. It has been asserted that the missing miniatures were copied in the seventeenth-century Belgrade Psalter, destroyed in 1941, but reproduced by Strzygowski.³ As regards artistic quality, that of the Tomič Psalter is slightly higher than that of the Serbian Psalter.

Stanza 1 is decorated in both Psalters with an Annunciation scene showing a flying angel; he descends from above and addresses an enthroned Virgin (Figs. 192, 210 and 352-353). A maidservant witnesses the Annunciation, which is a rare iconographic feature, recalling certain representations of the Annunciation to Anne.⁴ The flying angel literally reproduces the text of the first stanza, in which

¹ For a colour facsimile edition of this Psalter, see Džurova, A., *Tomič Psalter*, 2 vols. (Monumenta Slavico-Byzantina et Mediaevalia Europensia, 1), Sofia, 1990 (in Bulgarian with summaries in English and French), esp. I, 115-118; II, pls. 82-105, for the Akathistos in this Psalter. See also Lafontaine-Dosogne, Akathiste, 656, *passim*, figs. 31-34.

² *Die Miniaturen des Serbischen Psalters der Königl. Hof- und Staatsbibliothek in München. Nach einer Belgrader Kopie ergänzt und im Zusammenhange mit der syrischen Bilderredaktion des Psalters untersucht* von Joseph Strzygowski (Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien. Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 52.2), Vienna, 1906, 75-87, pls. LII-LVIII. Lafontaine-Dosogne, Akathiste, 658, *passim*, figs. 35-38. For a colour facsimile edition of this Psalter, see Dufrenne, S., Radojčić, S., Stichel, R., Ševčenko, I., Belting, H., *Der Serbische Psalter. Faksimile-Ausgabe des Cod. Slav. 4 der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, Wiesbaden, 1978, esp. I, 261-265 (a short description of the Akathistos miniatures by R. Stichel), *passim*; II, fols. 210vo-222vo, facsimile in colour.

³ Strzygowski, *Serbische Psalter*, 120-124.

⁴ Lafontaine-Dosogne, Akathiste, 672-673.

we read that the angel was sent from heaven. A flying angel also appears in the Skopelos icon, which is very close to the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 236 and 354).

Stanza 2, the second Annunciation of the Akathistos, reveals the angel holding a staff and approaching a sitting Virgin in the Tomič Psalter and a standing one in the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 193, 217, 372 and 381). A sitting maidservant is also depicted here, turning her head in the direction of the angel.

Stanza 3 is embellished with the Annunciation at the Well in both Psalters (Figs. 194, 218 and 388-389). The angel strides towards the Virgin who approaches the well on the other side of the picture, but turns her head to him. In the Tomič Psalter, the maidens who witness the Annunciation have been increased to three. They stand behind the well; one of them holds a pitcher. In the partially flaked miniature of the Serbian Psalter, only two maidens can be distinguished; a column is added in the middle of the well, transforming it into a fountain.

Stanza 4, the Conception of Christ, differs in the two Psalters (Figs. 195, 219, 407 and 409). The Tomič Psalter shows an exceptional iconography: The Virgin is painted on a throne with raised hands, and the Child in a clipeus on her chest; she is surrounded by a mandorla which is connected to a segment in the upper part of the scene. The mandorla represents *the power of the All-highest* which *overshadowed* the Virgin, while the Child in the clipeus suggests the *fruitful womb* of the Virgin, mentioned in the text. The mandorla, the clipeus and the segment are of a similar blue colour, denoting the same divine substance. This picture may be considered as the most successful way of illustrating the text of this stanza. A similar representation is found in the Skopelos icon, but the Virgin is depicted standing; the Child is placed on her chest, but not in a clipeus (Figs. 237 and 408). The scene in Cozia is also similar, but the Child has been omitted (Figs. 136 and 405).

The decoration of this stanza in the Serbian Psalter combines elements seen in the Tomič Psalter with the iconography applied elsewhere: The Virgin with the Child is seated on a throne while raising both hands in prayer; a red veil is spread behind her throne, held by two maidens who are clad in classical garments with short sleeves; a broad beam of light descends on the Virgin from a segment, both painted in gradations of blue.

Stanza 5 reveals a similar iconography for the Visitation in both Psalters (Figs. 196, 220 and 426-427). A maidservant is included as a witness of the recognition of the immaculate conception of the Virgin by Elisabeth. She is painted under a drapery making a gesture of amazement in the Serbian Psalter and behind an aedicula in the Tomič Psalter. One maiden is also seen in the Uspenskij icon, whereas in Valsamonero and Matejče one finds two maidens (Figs. 41, 94, 275 and 422-424).

Stanza 6, the Doubts of Joseph, shows a regular iconography in the Tomić Psalter (Figs. 197 and 438). The attitude of the Virgin and the arrangement of the draperies of her garments are similar to those seen in the Hodegetria Monastery, Valsamonero and even more in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 434-435 and 439). In the Serbian Psalter, Joseph bends in front of the Virgin and outstretches both hands in her direction (Figs. 221 and 448). This may be a sign of acceptance of her immaculate conception from the side of Joseph, visualising the last verse of this stanza: *But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia."*¹

Stanza 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated in both Psalters with a Nativity scene, but the number of the figures differs: The artist of the Serbian Psalter copied a full Nativity scene, including Joseph in a pensive attitude and the Bathing of the Child by two maidens (Figs. 222 and 465). The artist of the Tomić Psalter created a scene to fit the text of this stanza by limiting the secondary figures of the Nativity scene to the angels and the shepherds (Figs. 198 and 461). The Virgin, seated in the entrance of the cave on an elongated cushion, holds the Infant in an almost horizontal position and touches his face with hers in affection. A similar reduced iconography, but in a different arrangement of the figures, is found in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 239 and 460).

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, includes the cave of the Nativity in both Psalters (Figs. 199, 223, 478 and 481). The three Magi on horseback are arranged in a similar manner in both Psalters. The attitude of the Virgin, however, differs: she is shown reclining on a mattress in the Serbian Psalter, but kneeling in the opposite direction of the Magi, towards the Infant in the manger, in the Tomić Psalter. Moreover, Joseph in a pensive pose is placed to the left of the cave in the former Psalter and to the right in the latter one. An angel on horseback, depicted in an almost frontal attitude, shows the way to the Magi in the Serbian Psalter. The inclusion of the cave of the Nativity in the picture, but without the angel, is also seen in Matejče (Figs. 97 and 479). These scenes also illustrate the last verse of this oikos, in which is mentioned that the Magi reached the Child. An angel on horseback leading the way, a rare iconographic feature, also appears in Dečani and Marko, but these scenes belong to a different iconographic type; it only shows the Magi travelling on horseback, omitting, thus, the cave of the Nativity (Figs. 91, 118, 474 and 476).

Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, differs in both Psalters. The Tomić Psalter reveals a recurring iconography, showing the three Magi approaching on foot the enthroned Virgin with the Child, depicted in front of an architectonic decoration (Figs. 200 and 283). The composition seen in the Serbian Psalter is, on the contrary, exceptional (Figs. 224 and 490): The Virgin with the Child are frontally represented in the middle of the scene; they are flanked by the three

Magi, depicted standing on the right, and the half-figure of an angel on the left; Joseph in a pensive pose, as seen in Nativity scenes, is placed in the lower left corner. All figures are placed under an arch, from the middle of which a drapery hangs. This frontal and almost symmetrical arrangement of the figures is an archaic iconography, already found in Early Byzantine art.¹ The angel in this scene is, however, not an archaic feature. He also appears in this stanza introducing the Magi, but standing instead of flying, in St. Nicholas Orphanos, Dečani and the Marko Monastery (Figs. 82, 91, 119 and 487-489).

Stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, is decorated with similar scenes in both Psalters (Figs. 201, 226 and 510-511). They show the three Magi on foot approaching an enthroned figure in imperial garments, depicted in front of an aedicula; the low wall seen in the Serbian Psalter is missing in the Tomić Psalter. Lafontaine-Dosogne identified the figure in imperial garments as the governor of Babylon and Stichel as the king of Babylon.² This figure has been also identified as Herod,³ but the text of this stanza states that the Magi abandoned Herod and not that they visited him. The appearance of the enthroned imperial figure in the Psalters is unique among the decoration of this stanza. Other cycles show several people receiving the Magi outside the fortified city of Babylon (Figs. 504-506).

Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, is similar in both Psalters (Figs. 202, 225). It belongs to the iconographic type that shows Joseph with the Child on his shoulders leading the procession. The Virgin follows on a pack animal, resembling a horse in the Serbian Psalter. Idols fall from the walls of the city, at the gates of which a few people have been added in the Serbian Psalter. In the Tomić Psalter, a unique detail appears: a large radiating, blue halo surrounds the figure of Christ on the shoulders of Joseph; it successfully illustrates the first words of this stanza, in which *the light of truth* is flashed by the Saviour in Egypt.

Stanza 12, illuminated with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, reveals the iconographic type of this scene in which Simeon is holding the Child (Figs. 203, 227 and 542-543). The Prophetess Anna stands a usual behind Simeon in the Serbian Psalter, but she is omitted in the Tomić Psalter. Joseph is not depicted standing behind the Virgin, but exceptionally sitting with a book in his hands in front of an aedicula on the left of the scene; he turns in the opposite direction of the protagonists of the scene. There is no logical explanation for the

¹ An example is seen in a sixth-century ivory in the British Museum: Kitzinger, *Early Medieval Art*, fig. 9. Ristow, *Geburt Christi*, fig. on p. 26.

² Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 684-685. Stichel in Dufrenne a.o., *Serbische Psalter*, I, 263.

³ Velmans, *Akathiste*, 141-142. Aspra Bardabake, 67-68.

¹ Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 678, interprets the position of Joseph as a kind of excuse.

attitude of Joseph in this scene,¹ but it surely demonstrates that the two Psalters have a common archetype.

Stanza 13, the New Creation, is decorated with the same subject but in a different arrangement of the figures (Figs. 204, 228, 544 and 551). In the Serbian Psalter, the Virgin with the Child is depicted enthroned in the middle of the scene and flanked by two groups of men. This kind of illustration of this stanza is inspired by the second part of the text of this stanza, in which the *womb without seed* of the Virgin is mentioned. It is similar to that found in the Cretan churches, but different from that seen in the churches of Macedonia and Serbia; the latter display Christ, instead of the Virgin, flanked by two groups of people; this picture is inspired by the first part of the text, in which Christ is called *a new creation*.

The Tomič Psalter deviates from the Serbian Psalter by showing an asymmetrical arrangement of the figures: The Virgin is depicted on a throne with Christ on her knees in front of an aedicula in the left part of the picture. Christ outstretches his hand in the direction of no less than eleven men, possibly meant to represent Apostles, depicted in the right part of the scene. This iconography is also applied in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, and in the Skopelos icon, but the Virgin is placed on the right of the scene and the group of men on the left (Figs. 545-547).

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, is decorated in both Psalters with a different variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 205, 229, 560 and 562). It visualises the words of the text, *strange birth* and *the great God appeared on earth as a humble man*. The Tomič Psalter shows the Virgin reclining next to the Infant in a cave, painted in the upper part of the scene. The bath of the Child with two maidens is depicted in the lower right corner, while four men raise their hands in exaltation on the left. The Nativity scene in the Serbian Psalter includes more figures: The Virgin is depicted seated in the cave, in which also the manger with the Infant, the ass and the ox are visible. She looks at Joseph, seated between two trees to the left of the cave. Angels are depicted above him, while the bath of the Child is placed below the cave. Five men approach the cave; two shepherds below them raise their hands in excitement. A Nativity variant also decorates this stanza in the Synodal and the Escorial manuscripts, and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 161, 183, 245, 559, 561 and 563). This kind of decoration is a simpler way of illustrating this oikos than the more sophisticated one seen in Ochrid and the Cretan churches (Figs. 569-572).

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is illustrated, as in most of the cycles, with the figure of Christ depicted twice: once in the upper part of the scene and

again in the lower part of it. In the Tomič Psalter, Christ Pantokrator is depicted enthroned in three quarters view (Figs. 206 and 579). He turns to the left, where the bust of Christ is painted in a blue segment with radiating beams of light. This is a simpler iconography than that decorating mural painting, in which the enthroned Christ is flanked by various figures. A similar asymmetrical arrangement of the two figures of Christ is seen in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 246 and 580). The decoration of this stanza in the Serbian Psalter deviates, but the concept is similar (Figs. 230 and 584). Christ is depicted enthroned between two trees in the middle of the scene. He is again represented as Christ Emmanuel standing in a mandorla in the left upper corner. A group of men approaches him from the right.

Stanza 16, mentioning the astonishment of the angels at the incarnation of Christ, is exceptionally adorned in both Psalters in a narrative way by showing a variant of the Nativity of Christ (Figs. 207, 232, 589 and 591). This is in contrast to the current iconography for this scene, which shows Christ or the Virgin with the Child venerated by angels (Figs. 592-603). In the Tomič Psalter, the Virgin reclines in front of the cave and looks at the Infant in a manger, above which the ass and the ox are painted; several angels surround the cave. The Nativity scene in the Serbian Psalter is different: The Virgin is depicted sitting on the mattress with the Infant in the manger and the two animals on the left. She looks, however, in the opposite direction of the Infant. A group of angels is depicted there, which is repeated on the other side of the cave. The figure of the pensive Joseph is added in the foreground. The attention paid by the Virgin to the angels emphasises their presence, mentioned in the text of this stanza. A Nativity scene, from which, however, the Virgin is omitted, is also chosen for the illustration of this stanza in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 246 and 590). The variant of the Nativity scene also renders the words of this stanza *incarnation, a man approachable by all and living among us*.

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, is decorated in both Psalters with an enthroned Virgin with the Child; they are painted in a mandorla, surrounded by six men holding unfurled scrolls (Figs. 208, 233 and 614-615). The men in the Tomič Psalter are bareheaded and clad in antique *chiton* and *himation*, whereas those in the Serbian Psalter wear crowns and are arranged in a composition recalling that of the *Prophets from Above* (cf. Figs. 273 and 296). A singular detail has been added to the scene of this stanza in the Tomič Psalter: two fishes are depicted to the right of the Virgin's feet, alluding to the characterisation of the orators in the text *as voiceless as fish*. The mandorla surrounding the Virgin and the Child in both Psalters is missing in the other cycles of the Akathistos. The latter reveal in general a similar composition, but the groups flanking the Virgin vary.

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, is illuminated in both Psalters with a similar, exceptional subject, which, however, differs in the arrangement of the

¹ Lafontaine-Dosogne, Akathiste, 689, remarked that this figure recalls Joachim consulting the books of the twelve tribes. Stichel in Dufrenne a.o., *Serbische Psalter*, I, 263-264, thought that the artist mistakenly copied the writing Zacharias from the Birth of St. John the Baptist and represented him here as Joseph.

figures (Figs. 209, 231 and 623-624). In the Tomič Psalter, Christ is represented sitting in a mandorla in the middle of the scene. The Virgin is depicted on the right, kneeling in front of Christ. A group of men is also shown kneeling on the left. Angels emerge behind a hill, which serves as background. The half-figure of the personification of the Cosmos, copied from a Pentecost scene, appears below Christ. Similar figures appear in the Serbian Psalter, but the Virgin and the group of men following her on the right are depicted standing. A full figure of the personification of the Cosmos is painted on the left. The artists, in their endeavour to illustrate the text as literally as possible, painted Christ as God in a mandorla flanked by angels; they added the Virgin and a few men to denote that Christ came *among us* in order to save the world, the latter represented by the personification of the Cosmos. The Salvation of the World is decorated in several other cycles with a variant of the Anastasis scene, which is a more sophisticated interpretation of the text than the 'narrative' one seen in the Psalters (Figs. 626-630).

Stanza 19, the Defence of Virgins, is preserved only in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 210 and 641). The Virgin is portrayed in a praying attitude, standing in front of two columns which are connected with a concave epistyl. She is flanked by two groups of people with nuns and monks in the foreground; most of them are clad in habits of the period in which the manuscript was executed. The nuns are depicted on the right and are followed by a female figure, which may be identified as St. Mary of Egypt on the basis of her habit. The monks on the left are followed by an unidentifiable beardless youth in short tunic. This scene may be associated with that seen in the Skopelos icon, in which the Virgin is also flanked by nuns and monks (Figs. 249 and 642).

The miniature of this stanza is missing in the Serbian Psalter. Its supposed copy, the Belgrade Psalter, which is now lost but published by Strzygowski, showed only female saints flanking the Virgin (Figs. 338 and 639). She is depicted standing in front of a wall and holding the Infant diagonally in her arms, which is wrapped in swaddling bands, as often seen in the manger of the Nativity scene. The three saints on the right are clad in imperial garments, while the two on the left in *maphoria*. The wall may be an allusion to the word *τείχος* (wall) in the text of this stanza, translated here as *defence*. A similar iconography is found in Marko, where two female figures in imperial garments are visible on the right and female saints in *maphoria* on the left (Figs. 129 and 638); the background is, however, different: it shows a tent in red colour. The other Akathistos cycles are decorated in the same spirit, with the Virgin in the middle, surrounded by two groups of people.

Stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, is preserved only in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 211 and 652). The half-figure of Christ is shown blessing with both hands; it is placed in a half circle, painted in gradations of blue in the upper part of the

miniature. Below him, a group of laymen and nuns stand on the right; on the left, one sees monks and dignitaries – actually meant to be cantors – wearing a *skaranikon* on their head, decorated at the front. They represent those who offer Christ many odes, but would accomplish nothing worthy of what Christ has given to them, as the text states. The artist follows the current iconography for this stanza, but in a different composition. In Dečani and Cozia, instead of Christ, the Virgin or her icon is venerated (Figs. 88, 144 and 656-657).

The miniature of this stanza is also missing in the Serbian Psalter. The Belgrade Psalter represented Christ enthroned and flanked by two angels on the left and two bishops on the right (Figs. 339 and 648). An identical iconography is found in Marko, but the groups of angels and bishops are larger (Figs. 130 and 647).

Stanza 21, comparing the Virgin to a Lamp shining to those in darkness, is decorated in the Tomič Psalter with a miniature literally interpreting the text (Figs. 212 and 664). The Virgin is shown standing in a mandorla, painted in gradations of blue, and embracing a huge candle. *Those in darkness* are depicted standing and bending forward in a dark cave in the right part of the scene. The Virgin oddly turns her head in the opposite direction; this feature is also seen in the Skopelos icon, which is the closest parallel to the Tomič Psalter and also shares with it the asymmetrical arrangement of the figures, (Figs. 251 and 662). The other type of decoration of this stanza reveals a symmetrical composition with the Virgin in the middle, flanked by two groups of men in a dark cave; it appears, e.g., in Elason, Matejče, Marko and Valsamonero (Figs. 665-666 and 668-669).

The miniature illustrating this stanza is missing in the Serbian Psalter. The iconography applied in the Belgrade Psalter is different from that in the Tomič Psalter, and singular in its kind. The half-figure of the Virgin orant, with the Child in front of her painted in a similar attitude, is placed in a large vessel, of which two legs are visible (Figs. 340 and 672). The vessel represents a lamp and is placed in a dark cave, alluding to the words of this stanza: *shining to those in darkness*.¹

Stanza 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is exceptionally illustrated in the Tomič Psalter with a scene inspired by the Anastasis (Figs. 213 and 683). Christ is depicted in a mandorla of three gradations of blue and decorated with golden rays. He holds the cross of the Anastasis and strides in the direction of a cave, as he extends his hands in a gesture of command; the doors of Hades are painted in front of him. In the cave, an angel is depicted restraining Satan. This

¹ For this scene and misinterpretations of the object in which the Virgin is depicted, e.g., as a boat with two oars, see also Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 100-101.

iconographic detail is copied from the Anastasis scenes which include the illustration of a passage from the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus (or Acts of Pilate, II), describing the Descent into Hell, chapter VI (XXII), 2: Christ took hold upon the head of Satan and delivered him unto the angels to bind him with irons.¹ The scene in the Tomič Psalter illustrates the cancellation of the old debts by the capturing of Satan; he was, according to a widely spread legend, in the possession of the *cheirophon*, which Christ tore up. The *cheirophon* is, however, not depicted. Variants of the Anastasis scene also decorate this stanza in the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons, and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 251, 286 and 684-686).

Another type decorating this stanza is seen in the Belgrade Psalter, which supposedly copies the missing miniature of the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 341 and 678). Christ is depicted in the middle tearing an unfurled scroll in two pieces. Two men on the left, who are clad in garments resembling those worn by Old Testament priests, and two men on the right, clad in *chiton* and *himation*, flank him. The scroll represents the *cheirophon*, our old debts, mentioned in this stanza, which Christ tore up. If the figures on the left indeed represent Old Testament figures, then they may be an allusion to the legend according to which God drew up a *cheirophon* (a contract) with Adam (Genesis, 2:17), which came into the possession of Satan. The iconography seen in the Belgrade Psalter also appears, e.g., in Marko, Ochrid, Roustika, Meronas and Valsamonero (Figs. 676-682).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is unusually illustrated in the Tomič Psalter with an asymmetrical composition, in contrast to the symmetrical one seen in other cycles (Figs. 214 and 695). The Virgin is shown sitting on a backless throne in front of two buildings connected with a drapery in red. A group of men approaches from the right. It represents cantors, clad as usual in long robes of various colours with wide sleeves;² the first two chanters wear green *skiadia* and the other ones white *skaranika* headgears. Christ on the lap of the Virgin is blessing in the opposite direction of the cantors; this is an indication that the Virgin was not created for this miniature, but copied from another composition. The scene is also asymmetrical in Matejče, but the Child in the left hand of the standing Virgin is correctly blessing in the direction of two bishops and cantors on the right (Figs. 110 and 696).

The miniature decorating this stanza in the Serbian Psalter is missing; the Belgrade Psalter shows a Virgin orant standing in the middle of the scene; she is flanked by two bishops on the right and two laymen on the left, in front of whom a child kneels (Figs. 342 and 694). A different variant for this stanza, seen in

Elasson, Marko and Cozia, reveals the veneration of the icon of the Virgin and includes an emperor (Figs. 78, 133, 146 and 697-698).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is decorated in both Psalters in a similar iconography. The icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* is flanked in the Tomič Psalter by two groups of men¹ (Figs. 215 and 707). That on the left includes clerics wearing white *phelonia* and cylindrical hats. The group on the right consists of cantors in robes of various colours and white bonnets, higher than those of the clergy. In the Serbian Psalter, the icon of the Virgin *dexiokratousa* is carried by two youths² (Figs. 234 and 712). The group on the left consists of clerics and that on the right of cantors in long robes and *skiadia*. An almost identical iconography to the Psalters is seen in the partially flaked miniature of the Synodal Akathistos manuscript (Figs. 167 and 706). Similar compositions are also found in Elasson, Dečani, the Marko Monastery, Matejče, and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 708-711). Another variant shows the veneration of the Virgin, instead of her icon; it appears in Crete, Ochrid and Cozia (Figs. 701-705).

¹ James, *Apocryphal N.T.*, 136.

² Moran, *Singers*, 96-97, fig. 58. Džurova, *Tomič Psalter*, I, 118; II, pl. 104, facsimile in colour.

¹ Moran, *Singers*, 97, fig. 59.

² Moran, *Singers*, 96, fig. 57.

THE AKATHISTOS IN ICONS

The Icon on the Skopelos Island

The Akathistos icon in the church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi on the island of Skopelos measures 75 x 47.5 cm.¹ (Figs. 235-252 and 344-345). It is ascribed to the first half of the fifteenth century. The 24 oikoi are painted around the Dormition of the Virgin. Twenty-two of them are depicted in square frames, starting from the upper left corner to the right (oikoi 1-5); they continue downwards on the right side of the icon (oikoi 6-12), then horizontally to the left at the lower part of the icon (oikoi 13-16) and finally upwards on the left side of the icon (oikoi 17-22). The last two oikoi are larger than the other ones; they are painted under pointed arches in relief, which are placed directly under the Koimesis scene; oikos 23 is represented on the left and oikos 24 on the right. The various parts of the Dormition scene are also painted under pointed arches in relief. The largest part, in the middle, shows the Koimesis proper, whereas another part above it, displays the Assumption of the Virgin: Above a sarcophagus, the Virgin is depicted in a mandorla that is carried upwards by two angels. Four compartments surround this scene, each one including three Apostles on clouds. The appearance of the Koimesis in the middle of the Akathistos has been naturally explained by postulating that the icon was made for a church dedicated to the Koimesis of the Theotokos. While the Koimesis scene follows the current Byzantine iconography, the addition of the Assumption of the Virgin above it is a rare phenomenon in Byzantine art. This, together with the pointed arches and the style, especially that experienced in the heads of the Apostles on the clouds, suggest a provincial Greek painter who also used western features. He is at his best in the comparatively larger figures of the Koimesis, whereas his tiny figures in the Akathistos scenes are in general of a lesser quality.

Oikos 1 is decorated with the Virgin enthroned and approached by a flying angel who emerges from the upper left corner (Figs. 236 and 354). The words of this

oikos, that the angel was sent *from heaven*, are, thus, brought in picture in a more accurate way than in the cycles showing the angel standing in front of the Virgin, as already noted. A flying angel for this stanza is also painted in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, the Uspenskij icon, in Cozia and, for stanza 3, in Matejče and the Marko Monastery (Figs. 352-359). The maidservant or the well, appearing in these scenes, is missing in the Skopelos icon. The appearance of a book held by the Virgin in the Skopelos icon is unique among the Akathistos cycles. The Virgin holding a book is a Western iconographic feature, possibly inspired by the Latin apocryphal Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, chapter 6; it mentions that *no one [were] more learned in the wisdom of the law of God than the Virgin*, and, further on, that *she was always engaged in prayer and in searching the law*.¹ The book already appeared on a stained glass in the Chapel of the Virgin in the Cathedral of Le Mans from ca. 1240 A.D.² In the Byzantine realm, it is also held by the Virgin in the Annunciation scene painted in the church of St. John the Evangelist in the village of Selli, Rethymnon province, dated 1411 A.D.³

Oikos 2, the second Annunciation scene, reveals a standing Virgin; she extends her arms in order to express her doubts on the words of the Archangel Gabriel, who approaches her striding (Figs. 236 and 254).

In oikos 3, the last Annunciation scene, the Virgin is shown again sitting but in an antithetical attitude, turning her body outwards and her head in direction of the angel, who is depicted standing (Fig. 401).

Oikos 4, referring to the Conception of Christ, shows a standing Virgin, surrounded by a mandorla that is connected with a segment painted in the upper part of the picture in a similar, dark blue colour (Figs. 237 and 408). The Holy Ghost in the shape of a dove is depicted below a golden disk, from which thin, golden beams extend; similar beams are visible behind the shoulders of the Virgin. Christ is depicted on her chest with outstretched hands. This is an exceptional iconography for this stanza, which only appears, but with slight differences, in Cozia and in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 136, 195, 405 and 407). The mandorla connected with the segment successfully renders, as already noted, *the power of the All-highest* overshadowing the Virgin, mentioned in the text of this stanza. In most of the other cycles, the Power of the All-highest is rendered with a large veil held by maidens of angels behind the throne of the Virgin (Figs. 409-419).

¹ *Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, and Revelations* (Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325, Vol. 16), translated by Alexander Walker, Edinburgh, 1870, 24.

² Hetherington, Paul, *Pietro Cavallini. A Study in the Art of the Late Medieval Rome*, London, 1979, 17, citing Hucher, E., *Calques de vitraux peints de la cathédrale du Mans*, Paris, 1864, pls. 36-37.

³ Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 239-240, figs. 299-300.

¹ On this icon see Lazaridis, P., in *AD*, 19 (1964), *Chronika*, 285-287, sch. 5, pl. 317, ascribed to the fourteenth century. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 658. Catalogue of the Exhibition *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art*, no. 99, entry by M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, with a colour reproduction on p. 100. Aspra Bardabaki, *Akathistos*, 18, 64, 68, 72, 86, 89, 93, 95, 99, 102, 107, 109.

Oikos 5, the Visitation, reveals, as is usual, the Virgin and Elisabeth embracing each other (Figs. 237 and 432). A construction in gradations of blue surrounds them in front of a wall similar to that seen in the decoration of the previous oikos.

In oikos 6, the Doubts of Joseph, the Virgin defends herself from his accusations by raising her hands (Figs. 238 and 439). A close parallel can be seen in the Tomič Psalter, especially in the three-quarters position of the Virgin and the arrangement of the garments (Figs. 197 and 438).

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 239 and 460). The Virgin is portrayed sitting on a mattress next to the Infant, painted in a manger. An elderly shepherd distinguishes himself through his widely outstretched hands in exaltation and his brilliant red cloak, whereas a younger one quietly sits in the lower right corner of the scene. A third shepherd is depicted standing above him, as a pendant to the three angels on the left of the scene. A reduced variant of the Nativity scene is also found in the Tomič Psalter, but the figures in it are differently arranged (Figs. 198 and 461). The artists of this variant adapted the Nativity scene to the text of this stanza, whereas other artists copied a full Nativity scene, without paying sufficient attention to the text. Examples of the latter can be seen in Cretan churches, the Serbian Psalter and in Marko (Figs. 462-466).

Oikos 8, the Journey of the Magi, shows the Magi on horseback in a mountainous landscape and raising their hands upwards, a scene that we find in most of the cycles (Fig. 475).

Oikos 9, the Adoration of the Magi, depicts the three Magi holding their gifts and approaching on foot the enthroned Virgin with the Child, painted in front of a wall (Figs. 240 and 484).

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, is illustrated with a rare iconography (Figs. 241 and 508). The Magi enter the city of Babylon on foot, an iconography also seen in the Synodal and the Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 155, 179, 507 and 509). Other cycles reveal a triumphal return of the Magi by showing them on horseback approaching the fortified city of Babylon, from which the citizens of Babylon come out to receive them (Figs. 504-506).

Oikos 11, the Flight into Egypt, shows the Virgin on a pack animal holding Christ and following Joseph (Figs. 242 and 524). Joseph turns in the direction of the Virgin, while entering the walled city of Egypt. No place is consequently left for the depiction of the personification of Egypt at the gate. This detail is also found in the Kremlin icon (Figs. 269 and 525). No idols have been added on the walls of the city in both icons, although they are explicitly mentioned in the text.

Oikos 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, is restricted to the main figures of the scene (Figs. 243 and 528). The Virgin and Simeon holding the Child flank the altar, on which a book is placed; a ciborium raises above the altar. Joseph and the Prophetess Anna have been omitted. A similar reduced

iconography, also with Simeon holding the Child, appears in the Synodal and the Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 156, 189 and 529-530).

Oikos 13, the New Creation, shows three men venerating the Virgin with the Child (Figs. 244 and 547). The attitude of the Virgin, having the Child on her left knee and presenting it to the men, is identical to that seen in the Synodal and the Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 160, 182 and 545-546). The composition belongs to one of the two types decorating the second part of this oikos, in which the *womb without seed* alludes to the Virgin. The other type shows a symmetrical arrangement of the figures, revealing the Virgin and the Child in the middle of the scene.

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, is decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 245 and 563). It shows the Infant in a cave, painted in the lower right corner of the scene, and Joseph, instead of the Virgin, on a mattress above the cave; a few figures, one of which has the upper part of the body naked, approach the Child from the left. The replacement of the Virgin by Joseph is singular; it recalls the Dream of Joseph, but the angel is missing. The choice of illustrating this oikos with a variant of the Nativity scene follows the manuscript tradition; it appears in all four manuscripts in which the Akathistos has been preserved, i.e., the Synodal and the Escorial codices, and the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters¹ (Figs. 559-562). This scene is inspired by the words of this stanza, *strange birth* and *the great God appeared on earth as a humble man*; it is a simpler manner of decorating this oikos than the complex and sophisticated one seen in other Akathistos cycles (Figs. 564-573).

Oikos 15, the Double nature of Christ, shows Christ seated on a wide throne; in the upper right corner the bust of Christ appears again in a segment (Figs. 246 and 580). The double nature of Christ is, thus, brought in picture by depicting him once on the earth and again in heaven. A similar asymmetrical arrangement of the two figures of Christ is seen in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 206 and 579). This is again a simpler scene than that decorating mural painting, in which the enthroned Christ is flanked by various figures (Figs. 581-585).

Oikos 16, referring to the angels astounded at the incarnation of Christ, is also decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 246 and 590), while other cycles show Christ or the Virgin with the Child venerated by angels. The Infant is depicted in the cave together with an animal. The Virgin is missing from the scene. Above the cave, five angels are represented, by which the angels, mentioned at the beginning of this oikos, are also brought in picture. This narrative illustration of this oikos with a Nativity scene is found only in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 207, 232, 589 and 591).

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, is illustrated with an enthroned Virgin *dexiokratousa*, flanked by two groups of men clad in long robes of various

¹ See also oikos 16 of this icon, which is also decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene.

colours (Figs. 247 and 609). An enthroned Virgin *dexiokratousa* also appears in Elasson, but this detail is not sufficient to relate these two scenes (Figs. 70 and 608).

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, is adorned with a singular iconography (Figs. 248 and 625). The Virgin is shown sitting in a pensive pose above a cave and looks at the Christ Anapeson.¹ In the cave the personification of Cosmos is depicted sitting, wearing a red crown and a red robe. Christ Anapeson may be seen here as the *Salvator mundi*, referred to in this oikos; this figure is also an allusion to the Passion and the Resurrection of Christ, the latter decorating this stanza in other cycles of the Akathistos (Figs. 626-630). The Virgin is the middle of the incarnation of Christ; her pensive attitude may be explained as an allusion to the Passion of her child. The personification of Cosmos naturally visualises the world to which Christ came as a man in order to save it, mentioned in the text of this oikos. The Virgin and the personification of Cosmos also appear in this stanza in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 209, 231 and 623-624). The decoration of this oikos with the Christ Anapeson is unique among Byzantine cycles, in contrast to a few Post-byzantine ones.²

Oikos 19, the Defence of Virgins, is decorated with a Virgin without the Child standing in front of a wall (Figs. 249 and 642). She is flanked by a group of nuns and a group of monks. Nuns and monks also flank the Virgin in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 210 and 641).

Oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, is illustrated with a liturgical scene (Figs. 250 and 650). Monks, nuns and cantors with *skiadia* headgears venerate the icon of Christ.³ The appearance of the icon of Christ, instead of Christ 'himself', seen in other cycles, is unique. An icon is also venerated in Dečani and Matejče, but it depicts the Virgin instead of Christ (Figs. 88, 107 and 657). This is a less accurate rendering of the text, because it is Christ who is addressed in this stanza.

Oikos 21, comparing the Virgin to a lamp shining to those in darkness, is decorated with the Virgin in a mandorla holding a candle and a group of men in a dark cave (Figs. 251 and 662). Quite exceptional is the half-figure of Christ on the flame of the candle, drawn in white lines; his appearance can be explained by the text of this oikos, in which he is characterised as *the incorporeal flame*

¹ Genesis, 49:9: *Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?* For Christ Anapeson, see: Pallas, D.I., *Passion und Bestattung Christi in Byzanz. Der Ritus - Das Bild* (Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia, 2), München, 1965, 184-196. Wessel, K., in *RbK*, I, 1011-1012. Lucchesi-Palli, E., in *LCI*, I, 396-398, s.v. *Christus - Anapeson*.

² For Post-byzantine examples of this type of decoration for oikos 18, see Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 93.

³ Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 99.

lighted by the Virgin.¹ The Virgin peculiarly turns her head in the opposite direction. A similar asymmetrical arrangement of the figures is seen in the Tomič Psalter, in which the Virgin has an almost identical stance (Figs. 212 and 664). The other iconographic type decorating this oikos shows a symmetrical arrangement of the figures.

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of Old the Debts, is illustrated with a variant of the Anastasis scene (Figs. 251 and 684). Christ holds the cross of the Anastasis and approaches the cave of the underworld; Adam and Eve are depicted in it, together with a few righteous behind them. The scene is inspired by the first words of this stanza: *The Redeemer of all mankind wished to cancel our old debts*. The cancellation of the ancient debts and the salvation of mankind are interpreted here by the descent of Christ in the underworld and the resurrection of the forefathers Adam and Eve. Variants of the Anastasis scene also illustrate this stanza in the Tomič Psalter, the Uspenskij icon and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 683 and 685-686). The other iconographic type decorating this stanza appears in more cycles; it shows Christ tearing the *cheirophon*, mentioned in the last verse of the text, and flanked by two groups of people (Figs. 674, and 676-682).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is decorated with the Virgin, enthroned with the Child on her lap (Figs. 252 and 688). She is flanked by two groups of cantors wearing high, pointed hats, presumably *skiadia*. The drapery arranged above all the figures of this scene is exceptional. Aspra Bardabake thinks that it suggests the tent mentioned in the first *chaitismos* of this oikos, which calls the Virgin *abode* (literally, tent) *of God and Word*.² A similar, heavier drapery appears in Ochrid, Valsamonero and Vori, but in oikos 24 (Figs. 702-704). The depiction of the Virgin enthroned in oikos 23 also appears in several other representations of this oikos, whereas another variant in Elasson, Marko and Cozia shows the veneration of the icon of the Virgin and includes an emperor (Figs. 697-698).

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is illustrated with a liturgical scene (Figs. 252 and 708). It shows two groups of men venerating the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria*. The first group consists of three monks and the second one of laymen, two of whom hold *hexapteryga* standards. The icon is placed on a stand in the right part of the scene, making the composition asymmetrical. Several other cycles are decorated with a similar iconography, but the icon is placed in the middle of the scene (Figs. 706-714). Another iconographic variant of this oikos reveals the veneration of the Virgin instead of her icon; it appears in Ochrid, Cozia and Crete (Figs. 701-705).

¹ Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 102, explained the figure of Christ with another verse: *for by lighting the incorporeal flame*.

² Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 109.

The Icon in the Kremlin Museums of Moscow

The icon no. 3039 in the Kremlin Museums of Moscow includes eighteen scenes decorating the first eleven stanzas of the Akathistos¹ (Figs. 253-269, 348-351). It is obviously a part of a polyptych, the other wing or wings of which have not been located as yet. This large icon measures 161.3 x 97.5 cm., but originally was smaller and measured only 134 x 82 cm. The increase in size is due to nineteenth-century additions: a row of seraphs to the upper part of the icon and a row of eleven half-figure saints to the lower part. To the nineteenth century also belong the elaborate clouds seen on the stanzas 8, 12, 15 and 16. The verses, written in the upper part of every of the eighteen scenes, also originate from the nineteenth century. They are variants of the Russian Akathistos text, occasionally shortened, and generally are in agreement with the scenes on which they are written.² One cannot establish whether these verses copy original ones, and if so, ascertain the language in which the original verses were written. Neither the nationality of the painter, Russian or Greek, has been as yet determined with certainty. It is also unfortunate that the scenes of the second part of the Akathistos have not been preserved; one cannot, therefore, know if any specific Russian iconographic features, appeared in them, as seen in the icon no. 1065 in the Uspenskij Sobor, examined below.

Smirnova dated the icon on stylistic grounds to the first third of the 15th century, but she could not decide whether it was painted in Novgorod or not.³ Ostašenko⁴ compared the first Annunciation scene of this Akathistos icon to a large Annunciation scene in an icon found in the Novgorod Museum (no. 2174), assigned to the second half of the fourteenth century.⁵ Comparisons of huge figures like those in the latter icon, with small ones such as those painted in the Akathistos icon, do not, however, usually lead to satisfactory results, when one attempts to establish stylistic similarities. On the basis of the classicising style with elongated slender figures in restrained motion, the *sfumato* on the faces and

¹ The icon was brought to the Kremlin Museums of Moscow from the Cathedral of St. Basil the Blaženyj in the Red Square of the same city in 1924. Smirnova, E.S., Laurina, V.K., Gordienko, E.A., *Živopis' velikogo Novgoroda XV vek*, Moskva, 1982, 345-353, no. 80. Catalogue of the exhibition *Vizantija. Balkany. Rus'. Ikony XIII-XV vekov*, Moscow, 1991, no. 70, entry by E. Ostašenko. The article of Scheffer, N., "The Akathistos of the Holy Virgin in Russian Art," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 6th Series, Vol. 29 (1946), 5-16, does not deal with the two Russian icons discussed in this book.

² Salutation 9 of stanza 3 forms an exception, as we shall see; it is written on scene 9, an additional scene to stanza 3, and again on scene 12, which decorates stanza 7 with a Nativity scene.

³ Smirnova, a.o., *Novgorod*, 353.

⁴ Catalogue of the exhibition *Vizantija. Balkany. Rus'*, p. 241.

⁵ 202 x 157 cm. Catalogue of the exhibition *Vizantija. Balkany. Rus'*, 240-241 no. 69; entry by E. Gordienko.

the colour scale, I should like to characterise this Akathistos icon as provincial Byzantine of good artistic quality, and chronologically place it in the beginning of the fifteenth century, a date already suggested by Smirnova.

The Akathistos cycle in this icon is unique among those which have been preserved, because no less than eighteen scenes decorate only ten stanzas; moreover, an exceptional iconography is found in several of these scenes. Stanza 1 is illustrated with four scenes. The first scene decorates the main text of this stanza and the following three scenes illustrate *chairetismoi* from this stanza. Stanza 2, which has no *chairetismoi* text, is decorated with only one scene. Stanza 3 is also decorated with four scenes, in a similar manner to stanza 1. Stanza 4 has not been illustrated at all. Stanzas 5 and 6 are illustrated with only one scene each. Stanza 7 is decorated with three scenes, and the remaining ones, stanzas 8-11, are again illustrated with one scene each.

Stanza 1 (*ikos* 1), the first Annunciation scene, shows the Archangel Gabriel outstretching his hand in a gesture of speech towards the Virgin and holding a staff ending in a *fleur de lis* (Figs. 254 and 364). The Virgin stands in front of her seat, places her hand near her face and slightly bends her head to listen to the words of the angel.

The first additional scene to the first stanza, reveals the Virgin standing on a suppedion;¹ she slightly bends forward and pulls Adam from the cave of Hades (Fig. 255). The composition is inspired on that of the Anastasis scene showing a Christ of the *katabasis* type; the figure of the Virgin substitutes that of Christ here. The verses of the first three *chairetismoi* of this stanza are written in the upper part of the scene. They are all related in one or other way to the resurrection of Adam. In the first salutation, *Hail to you through whom joy will shine out*, the *joy* is visualised by the resurrection of Adam. In the second salutation, *Hail to you through whom the curse shall pass away*, the redemption of mankind from the original sin is again suggested by the resurrection of Adam. The third salutation, *Hail, redemption of fallen Adam*, speaks of itself for the scene.

The second additional scene to the first stanza shows the Virgin, this time in a frontal position, pulling Eve from the cave of Hades² (Fig. 256). The scene decorates the fourth salutation: *Hail, deliverance of the tears of Eve*; it is written in the upper part of the picture, along with the salutations 5-6.

Both additional scenes to stanza 1 are unique, not only among representations of the Akathistos, but also among the entire Byzantine iconography. In both scenes a small, dark mandorla is painted on the chest of

¹ It is the second picture (no. 2) in the first row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

² It is the third picture (no. 3) in the first row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

the Virgin; the first one is too dark in order to permit one to make iconographic observations, but the presence of the bust of the Child may be postulated on the bases of the next scene: it is visible in white and blue grisaille in the mandorla on the chest of the Virgin portrayed with Eve.¹ The Virgin with a small transparent mandorla on her breast, in which the Child can be distinguished in grisaille, is also seen in the well-known icon of the Annunciation in the St. Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai, dating from ca. 1200 A.D.² (Fig. 301).

The Virgin pulling a figure from his grave, which is an exceptional iconographic theme, can also be seen in a Psalter in Oxford, Christ Church gr. 61, fol. 102vo, dating from 1391 A.D.³ (Fig. 717). It shows the monk Kaloeidas, presumably the donor of the Psalter, in a unique iconography for a portrait and for an intercession composition: The Virgin *Oxeia Antilepsis* (Quick Assistance) pulls monk Kaloeidas out of his sarcophagus and introduces him to the enthroned Christ *Eleemon* (the Merciful), depicted on the opposite page. Galavaris interpreted this miniature as a representation of the Virgin coming out of Hell and bringing the monk from darkness into light. He associated it with a widely spread literary tradition which derives from an apocryphal text describing in great detail the Descent of the Virgin into Hell. Its title, in one of the several versions that have been preserved, reads, *The Apocalypse of the Virgin who descended into Hell and saw how the sinners were punished*.⁴ The Virgin is addressed in this *Apocalypse* by the archangel Michael, who guides her through

¹ Smirnova a.o., *Novgorod*, 352, associated the shape of this tiny mandorla with that of the Burning bush of Moses (Exodus, 3:1-8), one of the prefigurations of the Virgin.

² Weitzmann, *Verkündigungssikone*, *passim*. Mouriki, D. in *Sinai*, 107-108, 385 note 36, with extensive bibliography. Vokotopoulos, *Icons*, 202, figs. 49-50. In the Ustjuk Annunciation icon, ascribed to Novgorod and now in the Tretjakov Gallery in Moscow, dated ca. 1200 A.D. (our Fig. 719), the Child on the chest of the Virgin is neither placed in a medallion nor painted in grisaille, but it still represents the unborn Christ, because it is not held by the Virgin but sways. Onasch, K., *Ikonen*, Berlin, 1961, 15f. Good colour reproductions of this icon are published by Salko, N., *Early Russian Painting, 11th to Early 13th Centuries. Mosaics, Frescoes, Icons*, Leningrad, 1982, pls. 182-185.

³ Vokotopoulos, Joasaph, 79-198, pls. 100-104. Galavaris, G., "Mary's Descent into Hell: A Note on the Psalter Oxford, Christ Church Arch. W. gr. 61," *Byzantine Studies*, 4.2 (1977), 189-194, figs. 1-2. Spatharakis, *Corpus*, no. 274, fig. 485.

⁴ Tischendorf, C. von, *Apocalypses apocryphae*, Leipzig, 1886, xxvii-xxix, summaries from three manuscripts. James, M.R., *Apocrypha Anecdota* (Texts and Studies: Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature, II.3), Cambridge, 1893, 109-126; translated into English by Rutherford, A., "The Apocalypse of the Virgin," in Menzies, A., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. X, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1898, 167-174. The same recension, based on more recent manuscripts than that used by James, was published by Pernot, H., "Descente de la Vierge aux Enfers d'après les manuscrits grecs de Paris," *Revue des études grecques*, 13 (1900), 233-257 (Galavaris, *op. cit.*, 190-191 notes 3-4, gives a summary of the text in English). A new edition of this text was published by Delatte, A., "Textes grecs inédits relatifs à l'histoire des religions," *Anecdota Atheniensia*, I, Liège, 1927, 272-288. A part of the information in this note is taken from Mimouni (see below).

the Underworld, with invocations and similar adjectives to those found in the Akathistos hymn. Christ finally granted the sinners rest every year from Easter to All Saints' Day, after the intercession of the Virgin. It is amazing that Galavaris, without knowing of the existence of the representations of the Virgin pulling Adam and Eve in the Kremlin icon of the Akathistos, remarked that this apocryphal story was widely spread in Russia.¹ Indeed, this *Apocalypse of the Virgin* is very well represented in the Slavonic literary tradition, and has had a considerable influence. The oldest Slavonic translation has been ascribed to the twelfth century, while the Greek original may date as early as 500 A.D.² One may suggest that the addition of a scene with the Virgin substituting Christ in the 'Anastasis' scene of this Akathistos icon can be explained by the increasing Mariolatry in Byzantium and certainly in Russia.³ Apocryphal texts, like the one associated by Galavaris with the iconography of the Virgin, may have influenced the artist of the icon to show the Virgin pulling Adam and Eve from Hades. The two scenes of the icon, showing the Virgin as an active intercessor, may be added to that in the Christ Church Psalter, cited above.

The third and last additional scene to the first stanza, exhibits an enthroned Virgin with the Child and three men in proskynesis in front of her⁴ (Fig. 257). The verses in the upper part of the picture are the *chairetismoi* 7-13. The enthroned Virgin with the Child may be related to all of the *chairetismoi* written here, e.g., to the words, *throne of the king* (7), *hail to you who bear him, the bearer of all* (8), *womb of divine incarnation* (10), *hail to you through whom creation is reborn* (11). The kneeling figures in front of the Virgin are the people who utter *chairetismos* 13: *hail to you through whom we worship the Creator*.⁵

Stanza 2 (*kondak* 2) is inscribed with the verses of this stanza⁶ (Figs. 258 and 379). It is illustrated with an Annunciation scene, both figures of which are almost identical to those in the first Annunciation scene of this icon; they only differ in

¹ Galavaris, *op. cit.*, 192, note 5, even referred to the use of this apocryphal story by Dostoevskij in the *Grand Inquisitor* of the *Brothers Karamazov*, and cited F.M. Dostoevsky, *The Grand Inquisitor*, trans. S.S. Koteliensky, London, 1930, pp. 2 and 3.

² Mimouni, S., "Les Apocalypses de la Vierge, état de la question," *Apocrypha. Revue Internationale des Littératures Apocryphes*, 4 (1993), 101-112, esp. 108; for the Greek editions of the text see *idem*, 104-105, with the remark that there is not a critical edition yet; on the Slavonic tradition see *idem*, 103, note 12, in which he cites, among others, Müller, H., "Die Offenbarung der Gottesmutter über die Höllenstrafen; Theologischer Gehalt und dichterische Form," *Die Welt der Slaven*, 6 (1961), 26-39. Charlesworth, J.H., *The New Testament apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha: A Guide to Publications with Excurses on Apocalypses*, London, 1987, 413-415.

³ Galavaris, G. "A Question of Mariolatry in Byzantium," *The New Review*, 4.4 (1964), 1-15.

⁴ It is the fourth picture (no. 4) in the first row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

⁵ This verse is different from the Greek Akathistos, in which it reads: *hail to you through whom the Creator becomes a child*.

⁶ It is the fifth picture (no. 5) in the first row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

the architectonic background. No additional scenes decorate this stanza, presumably because it is not followed by *chaitetismoj*.

Stanza 3 (*ikos* 2) is also decorated with four scenes. The verses in the background are a short version of stanza 3. The first scene illustrates the main text of this stanza and shows an Annunciation scene¹ (Figs. 350 and 394). It slightly deviates from the two previous ones in the position of the hand of the angel and the omission of the hanging drapery of his garment, and the more upright head of the Virgin. The architectural constructions in the background, especially that on the left, are different.

All three additional scenes which follow, represent the Virgin in a unique iconography. The first one reveals the Virgin oddly standing on one corner of a bench, and supporting a ladder² (Fig. 259). Her purple maphorion widely hangs over the ladder, by which the latter is more emphasised in the upper part. The tiny figure of the Child descends the ladder and blesses in the direction of a group of men, who venerate him by slightly bending forward. The artist has, thus, literally decorated the seventh *chaitetismos* of this stanza, which is written in the upper part of the scene: *Hail celestial ladder by which God has descended*. One cannot avoid associating this scene with the Mariological interpretation of Jacob's ladder.³ The scroll that Jacob holds in his hand, e.g., in the representation of the Virgin surrounded by Prophets, *The Prophets from Above*, reads, according to the *Hermeneia*, *I beheld thee in a dream as a ladder reaching from the earth up to the heavenly city*.⁴ This text is inspired by Genesis, 28:12: *and [I] dreamed, and behold a ladder fixed on the earth, whose top reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascended and descended on it*. This prefiguration of the Virgin is usually illustrated with Jacob and the ladder, while the artist of our icon broke new ground by depicting the Virgin instead of Jacob.

The second additional scene to the third stanza⁵ (Fig. 260), is inspired by the next *chaitetismos*, no. 8, which is also written in the upper part of the scene:

¹ It is the first picture (no. 6) in the second row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

² It is the second picture (no. 7) in the second row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

³ Smirnova, a.o., *Novgorod*, 353, asserted that this scene is analogous with later Russian depictions of the Virgin and the Child, in which the Virgin holds a ladder in front of a rock depicted on her chest: Antonova, V.I., Mneva, N.E., *Katalog drevnerusskoj živopisi, Gosudarstvennoj Treťjakovskoj galerei. Opyt istoriko-chudožestvennoj klassifikacii*, 2 Vols., Moscow, 1963, nos. 439 and 522, figs. 22 and 35, ascribed to the middle of the 16th century. It would be more correct to speak here of a similar literary source of inspiration than of an analogous scene, as Smirnova did, because the iconography of the Akathistos scene and that of the icons of the Virgin described above are definitely not similar.

⁴ *Hermeneia*, 146 and 282. Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51. On the *Prophets from Above* see Mouriki, *Prefigurations*, 242-251, with a summary in English on pp. 267-270, pls. 72-93. The theme is also represented in the middle of the Uspenskij icon with the Akathistos, examined below.

⁵ It is the third picture (no. 8) in the second row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

Hail, bridge that bears men from earth to heaven. It shows the Virgin — without the Child — standing on the lower stairs of a construction meant to represent a bridge. She shows the upper part of the bridge reaching the heaven, painted in the form of a cloud, to a group of men standing below her. The two *chaitetismoj* written on the last two scenes examined here form an antithesis in mentioning Christ *descending* from heaven to earth for the redemption of mankind, and the hope of mankind to *ascend* from earth to heaven with the intercession of the Virgin. The bridge has been given as attribute to the prophet Jeremiah on a fresco depicting the *Prophets from Above* in the Cretan church of St. George in Ano Viannos, Herakleion, dating 1401 A.D.¹

Of great interest is the third additional scene of this stanza, portraying the Virgin enthroned with the Child on her lap² (Fig. 261). Red beams of light descend from the outstretched right hand of the Child to a cave, in the lower left corner of which a fire is lit. The scene decorates the ninth *chaitetismos*, *hail to you, mysterious mother of light*, written in the upper part of the scene after *chaitetismos* 8. Christ is here compared to light. The fire in the cave may, therefore, also allude to light — along with the beams descending from the Child's hand — and could be interpreted as the Child born in the grotto of Bethlehem.

Stanza 4 (*kondak* 3), referring to the Conception of Christ, is unfortunately omitted by the artist of this icon. One does not consequently know the pictorial solution that he would have given to such an interesting stanza, which has been illustrated in various ways in the cycles that have survived.³

Stanza 5 (*ikos* 3), the Visitation, adorned with the elongated figures of the Virgin and Elizabeth embracing each other, is of no special iconographic interest⁴ (Figs. 262 and 431). The Virgin, clad as usual in a purple maphorion, is slightly taller than Elizabeth, wearing a red maphorion. The background consists of a domed building covered with tiles and flanked by two elongated aediculae.

Stanza 6 (*kondak* 4), the Doubts of Joseph, reveals the Virgin standing in front of an aedicula and Joseph in front of a rocky landscape⁵ (Figs. 263, 351 and 444). This meaningless differentiation of the background also appears in the Uspenskij icon, discussed below; this similarity is, however, not sufficient to relate the two

¹ Papamastorakis, Viannos, 318, fig.317. Spatharakis, *Crete*, 148-152, esp. 151, no. 50, fig. 132, in colour. On this church, see also Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 95-97, *passim*.

² It is the fourth picture (no. 9) in the second row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

³ Smirnova, *Novgorod*, 352, explained the omission of this stanza by the presence of the Incarnation meaning in several other scenes of this icon.

⁴ It is the fifth picture (no. 10) in the second row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

⁵ It is the first picture (no. 11) in the third row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

icons, in which the figures are shown in a different attitude (Figs. 275 and 441). Joseph's body in the Kremlin icon is turned in the opposite direction of the Virgin, except for his head. His stance and the right hand with the forefinger pointing to the Virgin clearly express his doubts and even reproaches. The Virgin demonstratively raises her right hand in order to denote her innocence. A unique feature in the decoration of this stanza is the appearance of the bust of Christ Emmanuel on the chest of the Virgin, painted in grisaille in a blue clipeus. It actually belongs to the Annunciation of the Virgin, as the few preserved examples of this type of Virgin attest¹ (Figs. 301-302 and 719). By painting the Child in a clipeus on the chest of the Virgin in stanza 6, the artist of this icon has also illustrated the word *conception* of the last verse of this stanza: *But when he (Joseph) learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said 'Alleluia'*. No additional scenes inspired on the *chairetismoi* of this stanza have been painted here.

Stanza 7 (*ikos* 4), referring to the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated with three scenes.² The first scene shows the Nativity of Christ, as one would expect³ (Fig. 264). The pensive figure of Joseph and the Bathing of the Child by only one maiden are included in the lower part of the scene. The shepherds and the angels are excluded, but they appear in a separate scene, the next one in this icon. The scribe of the inscriptions wrote the beginning of this stanza on the next scene, for which see the next paragraph. In the upper part of this Nativity scene, he wrote the ninth *chairetismos* of stanza 3 (*ikos* 2): *hail to you, mysterious mother of light*. This *chairetismos* is also written in the scene 9 of this icon, discussed above. The words *mysterious mother of light* in this *chairetismos* were found suitable for the Nativity scene, although the scribe could very well have chosen a verse from the proper stanza 7 or its *chairetismoi*.⁴

The first additional scene decorating stanza 7 literally illustrates the first part of the text of this stanza:⁵ *The shepherds heard the angels singing of the incarnate presence of Christ* (Figs. 265 and 449). It shows two shepherds in front of a rocky landscape; the foremost shepherd draws the attention of the second one to three angels by pointing to them. The angels are placed in a separate compartment; their symmetrical arrangement recalls representations of the Holy Trinity. The couple of the shepherds are a common feature in Nativity scenes, while the isolation of the angels in a compartment, in the way it is painted here,

¹ They are the Sinai icon and the Ustjuk Annunciation, mentioned above in discussing the additional scenes to the first stanza of this icon.

² Smirnova a.o., *Novgorod*, 348, no. 80.

³ It is the second picture (no. 12) in the third row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

⁴ One is reminded that the verses on the scenes of this icon were written in the nineteenth century and that it is not absolutely certain that they copy original ones.

⁵ It is the third picture (no. 13) in the third row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

is exceptional. Elements from the Nativity scene were, thus, taken away here in order to form a second scene for stanza 7. The inscription, containing the beginning of this stanza mentioning shepherds and angels, is written here, because it is this scene that illustrates this text better than the previous one, showing a Nativity scene without shepherds and angels (Fig. 264).

The second additional scene illustrating stanza 7 is inscribed with the fifth *chairetismos* of this stanza: *hail, for the skies rejoice with the earth*.¹ It shows the Virgin standing and holding the Child, approached by a group of four men with covered hands (Fig. 266). They represent the *earth* of the text, whereas the indistinct figures of angels in blue above them visualise the *skies*. The praise of the Virgin by the shepherds is, thus, taken over by the entire world. The wall behind them may be explained, although not absolutely necessarily, by the third salutation of this stanza, *hail, protection against unseen foes*.

Stanza 8 (*kondak* 5), the Journey of the Magi, shows them on horseback, riding in front of a rocky landscape² (Figs. 253 and 471). The tabernacle-like building on the left may be an allusion to the city from which they departed. This differentiation of the background is also seen in the scene showing the doubts of Joseph in this and the Uspenskij icon, as already mentioned above (Figs. 275 and 351).

Stanza 9 (*ikos* 5), the Adoration of the Magi, depicts them in front of the enthroned Virgin and Child³ (Figs. 267 and 492). The rocky background with an opening in black behind the Magi suggests the cave of the Nativity. The Virgin is, however, sitting on a high throne, which is placed in front of a semi-circular construction. Christ peculiarly looks in the opposite direction of the Magi, a not unusual phenomenon for this scene.

Stanza 10 (*kondak* 6), the Return of the Magi to Babylon, shows them on horseback in front of a rocky landscape⁴ (Figs. 268 and 500). This is the simplest manner of decorating this stanza, in which no indication of the city of Babylon is made. It is also seen in the Uspenskij icon and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 280 and 498-499).

Stanza 11 (*ikos* 6), the Flight into Egypt, is the last scene of this icon (Figs. 269 and 525). It belongs to the iconographic type that shows the Virgin holding the Child. A rare detail appears in this picture: Joseph is shown entering the city and turning his head in the direction of the Virgin; no place is consequently left over for the personification of Egypt, usually standing in the entrance in other representations of this subject. No idols have been painted, although they are explicitly mentioned in the text. A similar but not identical iconography is found in

¹ It is the fourth picture (no. 14) in the third row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

² It is the first picture (no. 15) in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

³ It is the second picture (no. 16) in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

⁴ It is the third picture (no. 17) in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

the Skopelos icon, in which Joseph is also shown entering the gates of Egypt (Figs. 242 and 524). The similarities of the other stanzas are, however, not ample enough to correlate these two icons.

One may wonder whether this icon is an original creation of the artist who painted it or a copy of an already existing Akathistos cycle, in which a few of the stanzas were illustrated with more than one scene. This question may be answered if one presupposes that a creating artist makes no mistakes, or only mistakes of minor importance in comparison to those made by a copying artist. It is, however, observed that stanza 4 is missing in this icon; the figure of the Virgin with the Child in a clipeus on her chest, appearing in stanza 6 (the Doubts of Joseph), is copied in a wrong place from an Annunciation scene. One may, therefore, suggest that we are dealing with a copying artist who makes mistakes. This implies that our icon was not unique in its kind and that more illustrated Akathistos cycles existed, e.g., in manuscripts or icons, in which certain stanzas were decorated with more than one scene. There is one more mistake in this icon, but it cannot be proved whether it was made by the artist of the icon or the nineteenth-century artist who 'retouched' the icon: the text of the tenth *chairetismos* of stanza 3 is wrongly copied on the Nativity, the first scene decorating stanza 7, as already noted above.¹ Neither can one know whether the Nativity scene was divided into two scenes for the first time in this icon or in its model. Copy or original, this icon remains unique among the preserved Akathistos cycles and shows several scenes in a distinct iconography.

The Icon in the Uspenskij Sobor of the Moscow Kremlin

The large icon no. 1065 in the Kremlin Museums, Moscow, exhibited in the Uspenskij Sobor, measures 198 x 153 cm.² (Figs. 271 and 346-347). The paint has flaked in a few places; one can also see later layers of paint, one of which dates from 1705, if we are to judge from the letters АΨΕ, with which the Greek inscription in the lower right corner of the icon begins.³ This superb icon has

¹ We have already stated that the verses on the scenes are from the nineteenth century.

² Tempera on wood. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 658, note 34, fig. 21, *passim*, with bibliography. Tolstaya, *Assumption Cathedral*, pls. 80-81. Catalogue of the exhibition *Vizantijskaja Balkany. Rus'*, Moscow, 1991, no. 36, with bibliography. Gromova, E.B., *Istorija Russkoj Ikonografii Akafista. Ikona "Pochvala Bogomateri s Akafistom" iz Uspenskogo Sobora Moskovskogo Kremļa*, Moscow, 2005, with extensive bibliography. The article of Scheffer, N., "The Akathistos of the Holy Virgin in Russian Art," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 6th Series, Vol. 29 (1946), 5-16, does not deal with the two Russian icons examined in this book.

³ There are verses of at least three different colours written in the scenes, which, one may assume, denote three different layers of paint: red and black ones in Russian, both visible, e.g.,

been ascribed to the second half of the fourteenth century¹ and attributed to almost every possible Byzantine area or artist: the Monastery of Marko and Volotovo have been named, as well as a Serbian artist working in Novgorod, a Greek one active in Moscow, etc. The 25 stanzas (including the Prooemium) in this icon are painted in disorder around the enthroned Virgin with the Child surrounded by prophets, in the so-called composition, *the Prophets from Above* (Ἀνωθεν οἱ Προφῆται),² the Russian title of which is *Pochvala Bogomateri* (the Praise of the Mother of God). The upper row begins with stanza 21 (*ikos 17*), followed by stanza 12 (*kondak 7*), then stanza 19 (*ikos 10*), etc, while the first stanzas are painted in the lower part of the icon (Figs. 274-275 and 346-347). The Russian verses from the Akathistos, written on most of the scenes, enable one to identify the stanzas, particularly those of the second part of the hymn, which iconographically differ from those found elsewhere; the stanzas of the first part of the Akathistos, painted in the lower part of the icon, can be easily identified, although no verses are written on them.

The Uspenskij icon will be compared to the wall paintings in the Cathedral of the Birth of the Virgin in the Monastery of St. Ferapont, near Vologda, painted by Dionisij and his sons between 1500 and 1502³ (Figs. 287-294, *passim*), and to the large Akathistos icon no. 1834 in the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, painted in Moscow between 1550-1570 A.D., the middle of which is also painted with the Virgin surrounded by Prophets⁴ (Fig. 295). They are two examples among the numerous similar Akathistos cycles preserved in Russia, which date after 1500 A.D., and may be considered as representatives of the Russian Akathistos. The comparison aims to establish their relation to the Uspenskij icon and determine the importance of the latter in the decoration of the Russian Akathistos.

in the first and fourth scene of the upper zone, and one in gold in Greek in the third scene of the upper zone. I shall only mention major repaints in examining the various stanzas.

¹ Gromova, *Akafist*, 143-148, dated this icon between 1399-1406 A.D., and identified the artist as a capable and learned Greek, who was acquainted with the Russian history and culture (pp. 117, 220-224).

² *Hermeneia*, 146 and 282, translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51. On the *Prophets from Above* see Mouriki, *Prefigurations*, 242-251, pls. 72-93, with a summary in English on pp. 267-270. This theme is also painted in the Cretan church of St. George in Ano Viannos, Herakleion, dated 1401 A.D.: Papamastorakis, Viannos, 315-327 (with a summary in English on p.328), especially 318, fig.317. Spatharakis, *Crete*, 148-152, esp. 151, no. 50, fig. 132, in colour. On this church, see also Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 95-97, *passim*.

³ Danilova, I., *The Frescoes of St. Pherapont Monastery*, Moscow, 1970. On the Akathistos cycle of this church, see also Michel'son, T.N., "Živopisnyj cikl Ferapontova monastyra na temu Akafista," *Trudy Otdela Drevnerusskoj literatury*, 22 (1966), 144-164.

⁴ 146 x 112 cm. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 662, fig. 25. Catalogue of the exhibition *Gates of Mystery. The Art of Holy Russia*, ed. by R. Grierson, Cambridge, w.d., no. 80, entry by I. Shalina.

Kondak 1 of the Uspenskij icon, corresponding to the Prooemium of the Greek Akathistos, is illustrated with a procession of the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria*¹ (Fig. 276). Clerics and laymen raise a hexagonal base, on which the icon stands.² A large group of people venerate the icon, among whom bishops, cantors and women. A prominent place is taken by a royal couple, which flanks the scene.³ A similar icon is venerated in the picture of the last stanza of this icon, as we shall see below (cf. Figs. 276 bottom and 278 bottom). A similar iconography to the Prooemium, including an imperial couple, but for stanza 23, is seen in later Russian cycles of the Akathistos, e.g., in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg⁴ (Fig. 295).

Stanza 1 (*ikos* 1) is decorated with the Annunciation at the well⁵ (Figs. 279 and 357). The Virgin bends above the well and turns her head upwards, in the direction of a tiny, flying angel.⁶ The inclusion of the flying angel visualises more correctly this stanza, in which is mentioned that the angel was sent from heaven, as already noted. A similar but reversed scene, showing a flying angel and the Virgin at the well, is seen in the St. Ferapont Monastery, but for stanza 2⁷ (Fig. 358). Stanza 1 also reveals a similar iconography in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg (Fig. 295). It is closer to the scene in St. Ferapont, with which it shares the attitude of the Virgin, the shape of the well and of the form of the building to the right.

Stanzas 2 and 3 (*kondak* 2 and *ikos* 2), the second and third Annunciation scenes, show the Archangel striding towards the Virgin⁸ (Figs. 279, 380 and 392). The Virgin is depicted standing in front of her seat, placed in front of an architectonic construction. The posture of the Archangel and the Virgin differ in

the Annunciation scenes in St. Ferapont¹ and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg (Figs. 295 and 366).

Stanza 4 (*kondak* 3), the Conception of Christ, is decorated with a deviating iconography² (Figs. 279 and 402). The artist used the customary iconographic formula for the Conception, i.e., that of the Annunciation scene. One may observe here, that the first words of this stanza, *the power of the Highest overshadowed her*, were also uttered by the Archangel Gabriel in the description of the Annunciation to the Virgin by the Evangelist Luke, 1:35: ... *and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee*. In conclusion, four Annunciation scenes, instead of the usual three, decorate the first four stanzas of the Akathistos. The figure of the angel in stanza 4 is very similar to that in stanza 2, but the Virgin is depicted seated. A similar iconography has been applied in the St. Ferapont Monastery³ (Figs. 291 and 403). It is also seen in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, where the Virgin is shown sitting in an antithetical position (Fig. 295). The decoration of stanza 4 with an Annunciation scene is one of the characteristics of the Russian Akathistos; that in the Uspenskij icon is the earliest example.

Stanza 5 (*ikos* 3), decorated with the Visitation, exhibits as usual the Virgin taller than Elisabeth, both depicted in front of a rich background⁴ (Figs. 275 and 424). A female servant at the entrance of the building on the left witnesses the earthy recognition of the Immaculate Conception by Elisabeth. One or two maidens occasionally appear in more representations of this subject (Figs. 422-423 and 426-427). The Virgin and Elisabeth, including the architectonic background, are depicted in a similar manner in the St. Ferapont Monastery⁵ and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg (Fig. 295), but the tiny figure of the female servant is omitted (Figs. 295 and 425).

Stanza 6 (*kondak* 4), the Doubts of Joseph, represents the Virgin standing on a pedestal, higher than Joseph⁶ (Figs. 275 and 441). Joseph does not make gestures of accusation, but slightly bends in a pensive attitude in front of the Virgin. An aedicula is depicted behind the Virgin, while behind Joseph a rocky landscape is painted. This differentiation of background is also seen in the Kremlin icon, discussed above (Fig. 263). The figures in the Uspenskij icon are

¹ On the iconography of the Prooemium see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 663-671. *Eadem*, *Nouvelles remarques sur l'illustration du Prooimion de l'Hymne Akathiste*, *Byzantion*, 61 (1991), 448-457, esp. 450 on this icon. For the Prooemium (*kondak* 1) of our icon, see Salikova, E.P., "Otraženie istoričeskich Konstantinopol'skich realij v ikonografii ikony poslednei četverti XIV veka *Pochvala Bogomateri s Akafistom*," in *Gosudarstvennye Muzei Moskovskogo Kremļa. Materialy i issledovanija*, 7, Moscow, 1991, 45-56, esp. 45 and 47, fig. 2. Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 3.

² *Kondak* 1 is picture no. 13, the fourth one from above of the left vertical row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). The group to the right of this scene has been repainted.

³ Gromova, *Akafist*, 111, fig. 3, identified them as the emperor Michael and the empress Theodora.

⁴ Stanza 23 is the sixth picture of the lower row of the icon.

⁵ The first stanzas are curiously painted in the lower instead of the upper part of the icon; stanza 1 is picture no. 15, the first one of the second horizontal row from below (Figs. 346-347).

⁶ Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 4.

⁷ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 91 and 92 (in colour); Danilova complicated the enumeration of the stanzas of the Russian Akathistos even more than it is in reality by calling the Prooemium *First song*; her *Second song* is the Russian *ikos* 1 (stanza 1), the *Third song* is *kondak* 2 (stanza 2), the *Fourth song* is *ikos* 2 (stanza 3), etc.

⁸ Gromova, *Akafist*, figs. 5-6.

¹ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 23 and 24-26 in colour.

² Stanza 4 is picture no. 18, the fourth one of the second horizontal row from below (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 7.

³ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 93.

⁴ Stanza 5 is picture no. 19, the last one of the second horizontal row from below (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 8.

⁵ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 40 and 41 in colour.

⁶ Stanza 6 is picture no. 20, the first one in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 9.

similar to those in the St. Ferapont Monastery, but reversed (Fig. 447). The pedestal on which the Virgin stands in the icon is missing in the fresco.¹

The scene in the Uspenskij icon, showing Joseph bending in front of the Virgin and standing in a lower level than her, does not visualise his doubts, but his acceptance of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, as written in the concluding verse of this stanza: *But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia."* This innovative interpretation of stanza 6 is one of the characteristics of the Russian Akathistos, as the pictorial cycles which followed attest. It is also seen, e.g., in the later Akathistos icon in the Russian Museum of St. Petersburg (Fig. 295).

Stanza 7 (*ikos* 4), the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated with a simplified Nativity scene² (Figs. 275 and 456). The importance of the shepherds is therefore emphasised, in accordance with the text of this stanza. Two of them approach the cave with the Infant and the animals in it. One of them holds a lamb; the word *lamb* appears in the text. The other shepherd raises his hand, but no angels are painted in the scene, although they are mentioned in the text. The Virgin reclines on a mattress outside the cave and indicates the Infant. The Nativity scene in the St. Ferapont Monastery shows more figures, including Joseph among them (Fig. 457). Three shepherds, clad in more luxurious garments than one would expect them to wear, approach the Child.³ The Virgin is sitting behind the Child and shows it to the shepherds. Two of them turn their heads in the direction of three angels who are depicted above them, behind the cave. Dionisij successfully brought in this way in picture also the first words of this stanza: *The shepherds heard the angels singing* In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, a complete Nativity scene has been painted, including the Bathing of the Child, but no sufficient attention has been paid to the shepherds, to who this stanza is dedicated (Fig. 295).

Stanza 8 (*kondak* 5), the Journey of the Magi, is not painted next to the previous scene, as it should, but two positions further⁴ (Figs. 280 and 480). It shows the Magi on horseback in front of a mountainous landscape; the first one raises his hand and shows to the others the star of Bethlehem. A similar iconography is found in the murals of the St. Ferapont Monastery,⁵ but the Magi move in the opposite direction and are differently grouped (Fig. 477). A closer

¹ The Virgin of this stanza in the Monastery of the Hodegetria in Crete also stands on a suppedion, but the agitated attitude of Joseph denotes his accusations rather than his acceptance of the immaculate conception (Fig. 61).

² Stanza 7 is picture no. 21, the second one in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 10.

³ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 73 and 74 in colour.

⁴ Stanza 8 is picture no. 24, the fifth one in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 11.

⁵ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 81-83 and 84 in colour.

but not identical grouping of the three Magi to the Uspenskij icon is seen in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg (Fig. 295).

Stanza 9 (*ikos* 5), mentioning the Adoration of the Magi, is curiously painted before the Journey of the Magi¹ (Figs. 280 and 493). It exhibits the Virgin with the Child enthroned in front of an architectonic setting and the Magi in front of a rocky landscape. A similar differentiation in the background is also seen in the Kremlin icon, the fresco in the St. Ferapont Monastery² and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg (Figs. 267, 295 and 491-492).

Stanza 10 (*kondak* 6), the Return of the Magi to Babylon, is also painted in a wrong place, after the Flight into Egypt³ (Figs. 280 and 498). It reveals a grouping of the three Magi similar to that seen in the Journey of the Magi in this icon, but the Magi head in the opposite direction. Even the gesture of the first Magus, pointing to the star of Bethlehem, has been repeated, which does not make much sense in the return of the Magi. The fresco in the St. Ferapont Monastery also shows the three Magi in a procession in front of a rocky landscape, but the motion of the figures is constrained⁴ (Fig. 499). In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, an angel has been added to the scene, descending in the direction of the Magi (Fig. 295). This rare iconographic detail for this stanza also appears in Cozia (Figs. 139 and 502). He may be, as already mentioned above, an allusion to Matthew, 2:12, who states that the Magi were warned by God in a dream to avoid Herod, and that they returned to their country by another way. The last verse of this stanza also mentions that the Magi *abandoned Herod as a fool*. The angel must have appeared more than once in this stanza, because he is also mentioned in the *Hermeneia*,⁵ in combination with the city of Babylon, as seen in Valsamonero (Figs. 46 and 501).

Stanza 11 (*ikos* 6), related to the Flight into Egypt, is wrongly painted before the Journey and the Return of the Magi to Babylon⁶ (Figs. 280 and 519). It is decorated with a scene that belongs to the iconographic type showing James leading the procession, depicted here as a slender figure in red tunic. He is followed by the Virgin holding the Child on a pack animal and then by Joseph. A falling idol, represented as a white silhouette, can be distinguished in the lower right corner of the scene. It brings in picture the text of this stanza, in which the idols are explicitly mentioned, whereas in other representations of this *oikos* the idols are sometimes missing. A similar iconography is found in the St. Ferapont

¹ It is picture no. 22, the third one in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 12.

² Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 50.

³ It is picture no. 25, the last one in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁴ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 48.

⁵ *Hermeneia*, 149. An English translation by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

⁶ It is picture no. 23, the fourth one in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 13.

Monastery¹ and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg (Figs. 295 and 520).

Stanza 12 (*kondak* 7), the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, is painted in the upper row of the icon² (Figs. 281 and 536). Simeon is shown standing on a stand and holding the Child close to his face. The Virgin stretches out her covered hands in the direction of the Child. Quite unusual is the interchange of the position of the figures of Joseph and the Prophetess Anna; the artist depicted the former behind Simeon and the latter behind the Virgin, separating, as it were, men from women. The Prophetess Anna makes an ecstatic gesture. Simeon is also holding the Child in the St. Ferapont Monastery, but Joseph and the Prophetess Anna are depicted in their usual position³ (Fig. 535). In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, it is the Virgin who holds Christ (Fig. 295). This is a less accurate rendering of this stanza, because the text mentions that Christ was given to Simeon as infant.

Stanza 13 (*ikos* 7), the New Creation, is painted in an unprecedented iconography⁴ (Figs. 282 and 558). Christ in the middle of the scene is depicted turning in the direction of a group of men and showing them an open book that is placed on a lectern. The group of men may represent the Apostles. This picture can be possibly explained by the first verse of this *oikos*,⁵ if we consider the figure of Christ as representing the Creator himself, not an unusual phenomenon in Byzantine art. He points to the Gospel book on the lectern as the symbol of Christ, the *New creation* in the text of this stanza. The Virgin, alluded to in the second part of this stanza, is also saluted by St. John of Damascus⁶ (ca. 650-750) as a 'sealed book'⁷ and 'volume⁸ of new mystery.' The meaning of the book on the lectern in this icon may be, therefore, twofold. A similar iconography for this stanza is found in the St. Ferapont Monastery,⁹ but in a different arrangement of the figures, and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St.

¹ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 49.

² Stanza 12 is picture no. 2, the second scene in the upper row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, 129-130, fig. 14.

³ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 72.

⁴ Stanza 13 is picture no. 7, the second scene in the second row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, 185-190, fig. 18.

⁵ *The Creator revealed a new creation, and showed it to us, his creatures. He made it flourish from a womb without seed which he kept chaste, as it had been before, so that we might see the miracle and sing her praises, saying: (chaitetismo) follow.*

⁶ Migne, *PG*, 96, 692B (Second Homily on the Birth of the Virgin). St. Andrew of Crete, born ca. 660 A.D. in Damascus, also calls the Virgin *living book* and *volume of the new testament written by God*, in his homily on the Dormition of the Virgin, III: Migne, *PG*, 97, 1097A. Theodore Studites (759-826), in his fifth homily on the Dormition of the Virgin, calls the Virgin *holy bible* and refers to Jeremiah, 24:12-13.

⁷ Isaiah, 29:11.

⁸ Isaiah, 8:1.

⁹ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 69, left side.

Petersburg (Fig. 295). The decoration of this stanza with the representation described here is typical for the Russian Akathistos.

Stanza 14 (*kondak* 8), the Strange Birth, is also painted in the upper part of this icon, before the previous stanza¹ (Figs. 282 and 573). It exhibits two groups of standing monks venerating the Virgin with the Child, shown blessing with outstretched hands in a segment at the upper part of the picture.² The scene illustrates the text of the first part of this stanza, reading as follows: *And let us, seeing this strange birth, estrange ourselves from the earth, and turn our thoughts to heaven.* The division of the picture in an upper and a lower part is similar to one of the three main types decorating this stanza in other Byzantine cycles, but it is of a different iconography (Figs. 569-572): The figure of Christ there is substituted in the Uspenskij icon by the Virgin and the Child. It is important, for establishing the archetype of our icon, to note that from all preserved variants of this scene, the Russian one is the closest to the description of this stanza in the *Hermeneia*: *Heaven and on it the Virgin and Child seated on a throne; below the heaven is a crowd of hosioi looking up to heaven.*³ This suggests a Greek, however lost, model for this scene. An identical iconography to the Uspenskij icon is seen in the St. Ferapont Monastery⁴ and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg⁵ (Fig. 295).

Stanza 15 (*ikos* 8), referring to the Double Nature of Christ, is illustrated with a unique representation⁶ (Figs. 276 and 581). God the Father is represented in a medallion, which is placed in a large blue beam of light in the upper part of the scene; below it, Christ Pantokrator is portrayed enthroned, by which the double nature of Christ, alluded to in the text, is visualised. The blue beam of light connects God the Father with Christ, denoting that both of them are of the same substance. The throne of Christ is painted above the opening of the cave of Hades. The Pantokrator is flanked by the Virgin and St. John the Baptist in a Deësis composition⁷ and by two prophets. The Prophet on the right is clad in royal garments and points to the Father, explaining thus the presence of Christ at the same time in Heaven. The Virgin is depicted here as an intercessor; her appearance can be better explained by the eleventh *chaitetismos* of this stanza

¹ It is picture no. 6, the first one in the second row from above (Figs. 346-347).

² The Virgin and part of the first figures to the right are repainted. Gromova, *Akafist*, 190-196, fig. 15, identified the monks as St. Euthymios, St. Ephraim the Syrian, St. John Climacus and Russian(?) monks.

³ *Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

⁴ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 67.

⁵ Stanza 14 is the fifth scene from above in the left vertical row of the icon.

⁶ Stanza 15 is picture no. 11, the third scene from above in the left vertical row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, 196-203, fig. 16.

⁷ A Deësis composition is also found in Valsamonero, but for stanza 13 (it should be stanza 14), but in a different composition from that in the Uspenskij and the Kremlin icons, so that no relation between them may be postulated (Figs. 49 and 570).

(*hail, key to the kingdom of Christ*) than by the last words of this stanza proper (*the birth of a child by a virgin possessed by God*). Two hovering angels, carrying the symbols of the Passion, flank Christ. The figures in supplication, painted in the cave under the feet of Christ, suggest the resurrected sinners and can be explained by the ninth *chairetismos*, which reads, *hail to you through whom sin has been abolished*. The advent of Christ on earth, mentioned in the text, is interpreted in this picture as having as purpose the salvation of mankind through his Passion, alluded to by the two angels carrying the symbols of the Passion. The salvation is accomplished with the resurrection of the dead and the intercession of the Virgin during the Last Judgement, as the main subject of the scene implies. Thus, not only the text of this stanza, but also the two *chairetismoi* cited above inspired the artist for composing this picture. A Deësis composition for this stanza is also seen in the murals of the St. Ferapont Monastery¹ and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg² (Figs. 287, 295 and 582).

Stanza 16 (*kondak* 9) is adorned with the figure of Christ Emmanuel, centrally placed in a large medallion³ (Figs. 277 and 599). He is portrayed sitting on a throne, in the lower part of which *hexapteryga* and *trochoi* (wheels) are visible.⁴ Angels painted in grisaille surround him.⁵ The text of this stanza is dedicated to angels astounded by the incarnation of Christ and the iconography of this scene in other cycles usually consists of angels venerating Christ Emmanuel, the latter being a pre-eminent symbol of the incarnated Logos. This scene is distinguished from the other scenes through its round shape, the dark blue background and its placing in the middle of the upper part of the icon, exactly above the large figure of the Virgin (Fig. 271). This stanza is illustrated in the St. Ferapont Monastery with an adult Christ seated on a throne; he is surrounded by a half mandorla, in which four angels and two seraphs are painted in grisaille.⁶ In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, a Christ Pantokrator in a blue roundel is also surrounded by several angels⁷ (Fig. 295). These and other similar scenes, especially when a mandorla or a roundel appears, are inspired by the words of this stanza characterising Christ as *unapproachable as God*, while another type, showing the Child in the arms of the Virgin, is inspired by the words of this stanza describing Christ as *a man approachable by all*.

¹ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 69-70; she wrongly captioned this scene as *song fifteenth*, by which she means *ikos* 7 (stanza 13). The few letters visible on this scene belong to the text of *ikos* 8 (stanza 15).

² Stanza 15 is the fifth scene from above in the right vertical row of the icon.

³ Stanza 16 is picture no. 8, the third scene in the second row from of the icon (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, fig. 17.

⁴ The wheels are frequently mentioned and described by Ezekiel, 1:15-11:22.

⁵ More than one layer of paint and restorations can be distinguished in this picture.

⁶ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 125.

⁷ Stanza 16 is the sixth scene from above in the left vertical row of the icon.

Stanza 17 (*ikos* 9), the Voiceless Orators, is illustrated with a different composition than that found in the other cycles.¹ It shows an enthroned Virgin in the middle, to whom this stanza is addressed, without the Child (Figs. 278 and 612). She is surrounded by figures denoting, to judge from their costume, various ranks and tribes; most of them reveal very expressive stances and gestures. The first two figures represent bishops; the facial features of the bishop on the right resemble those of St. Basil.² The next two figures show enthroned kings with crowns and open books in their hand. Striking is the figure in the lower left corner through its attitude, a costume with a *loros* and a peculiar conical headgear, possibly meant to represent a hymn composer.³ The remaining figures are clothed in simpler costumes; three of them wear short tunics and white and red 'Jewish' hats. The man in red in the middle of the lower part of the scene fervently searches in his writings in order to explain the mystery of the virginity of the Mother of God, mentioned in the text of this stanza, whereas others have thrown their books and scrolls on the ground in despair, unable to solve the mystery. This scene is the closest one to the description of this stanza in the *Hermeneia*, which mentions details seen only in this icon: *The Virgin with the Child seated on a throne and to the right and to the left of her men, young and old, wearing on their heads fur hats or kerchiefs wound, in wonder, and at their feet lie books on the ground, open and closed*.⁴ This is another indication that the ultimate model of the artist of the Uspenskij icon may have been a Greek Akathistos cycle, if not for all, certainly for a number of stanzas. This stanza is illustrated in the St. Ferapont Monastery with only two figures flanking the enthroned Virgin, who is again portrayed without the Child⁵ (Figs. 288 and 610). In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, one sees more figures than in St. Ferapont, but less than in the Uspenskij icon⁶ (Fig. 295). Two bishops and four men in various attitudes and peculiar costumes, meant to represent orators, flank the enthroned Virgin with the Child.

Stanza 18 (*kondak* 10), referring to the Salvation of the World, is again painted in the first upper row of the icon⁷ (Figs. 284 and 631). It is exceptionally

¹ Stanza 17 is picture no. 12, the third scene in the vertical right row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

² Gromova, *Akafist*, 196-203, fig. 23, identified the bishops as St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil, the kings as Herod and Cyrus(?), and remarked that the costume of the orators recall those of Greeks and Jews.

³ The costume of this figure recalls that of cantors in other cycles, e.g., Figs. 88, 214.

⁴ *Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

⁵ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 42-44.

⁶ Stanza 17 is the sixth scene from above in the right vertical row of the icon.

⁷ Stanza 18 is picture no. 9, the fourth scene in the second row from above (Figs. 346-347). Gromova, *Akafist*, 185-190, fig. 19.

decorated with a Helkomenos scene.¹ A soldier pulls Christ to the cross with a white rope fastened around his neck. He points to the upper part of the cross, as if ordering Christ to climb it. Three horsemen are depicted to the right.² The first one also points to the cross. The Helkomenos is a characteristic of the Russian Akathistos, and is also painted, but only with one horseman on Golgotha, in the St. Ferapont Monastery³ (Figs. 288 and 632). In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, two horsemen are depicted on Golgotha⁴ (Fig. 520). A servant has been added, affixing the cross on a rock, below which the skull of Adam can be discerned. The scene in the Uspenskij icon and other Russian cycles is, thus, decorated with a different subject, based on a different interpretation of the text of this stanza, than in other Akathistos cycles, which are sometimes illustrated with an Anastasis (Figs. 626-630). The wish of Christ to save the world, mentioned in this stanza, is elucidated with the Passion of Christ, from which the scene of the Helkomenos has been chosen. This theory is attested by Post-byzantine cycles of the Akathistos: Aspra Bardabake mentioned that this oikos is decorated with the Road to Golgotha in Moldovița (1536-1537 A.D.) and with the Crucifixion in Humor (1535 A.D.), Moldavia.⁵

Stanza 19 (*ikos* 10), the Defence of Virgins, is painted in the upper row of the icon⁶ (Figs. 283 and 640). It shows the Virgin standing on a pedestal in a distinct iconography for this stanza. She wears her *maphorion* spread like that of a *Schutzmantel Madonna*,⁷ in order to protect the nuns flanking her, and holds a red girdle above them. She is, thus, portrayed as *the defence of virgins*, a quality ascribed to her in the text of this stanza. The nuns are clad in habits of the period in which the icon was executed; female saints stand behind them.⁸ The girdle

¹ Matthew, 27:31-34; Mark, 15:20-23; Luke, 23:26-32; John, 19:16-17. Gospel of Nicodemus, Pars I.B (Acta Pilati, B), caput X, 1-2. On the iconography of the Helkomenos see: Millet, *Recherches*, 362-379, figs. 382-407 (*Le Chemin de Croix*), esp. 380-385, figs. 408-411 (part of *La Mise en croix*). Bees, *Helkomenos*. Cottas, *Helkomenos*, 5-27. Cottas, *Christos Paschon*, 38-42, *passim*. Schiller, *Ikono-graphie*, II, 88-93, figs. 281-296. Boskovits, M., - Red., in *LCI*, 2, 601-602, s.v. *Kreuzaufrichtung*. Laag, H., Jászai, G., in *LCI*, 2, 649-653, s.v. *Kreuztragung Jesu*. Wilk, *Kreuztragung*, with several Byzantine examples. A good detail from the Uspenskij icon reproducing the Helkomenos can be seen in Tolstaya, *Assumption Cathedral*, pl. 81.

² The iconographic feature showing horsemen on Golgotha flourished in the West, but it also appeared in Byzantine art, however sporadically.

³ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 43-45.

⁴ Stanza 18 is the first scene in the lower row of the icon.

⁵ Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 93, citing Henry, P., *Les églises de la Moldavie du Nord, des origines à la fin du XVI^e siècle*, Paris, 1930, pls. XLII (3) and XLIII.

⁶ Stanza 19 is picture no. 3, the third scene in the upper row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁷ On this type of Virgin, also known as *Mater misericordiae*, see Belting-Ihm, C., "*Sub matris tutela*," *Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte der Schutzmantelmadonna*, Heidelberg, 1976.

⁸ Most of the female figures on the left of this scene were repainted. In the upper left corner, the beginning of this stanza is written in Greek, possibly by a nineteenth-century hand, which means that the icon was at that time in Greek hands.

held by the Virgin in the Uspenskij icon is a unique iconographic detail among other Akathistos cycles.¹ A similar iconography is seen in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg² (Fig. 520). The Virgin is also flanked by a group of nuns, but also by a group of monks, in the Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 641-642).

This iconography of the Virgin is identical to that found in depictions of the *Pokrov* (*Protecting Veil*), belonging to the Susdal (or Moscow) type, in which a large drapery, identified as the *maphorion* (*pokrov*), is occasionally held by the Virgin.³ An example of this type is found in an icon in the Vladimir-Suzdal Historical Museum from ca. 1500 A.D.⁴ (Fig. 722). The second, Novgorod type shows the veil held above the Virgin by angels. One of the several examples of this type can be seen on one side of a small bilateral icon, painted in Novgorod ca. 1500 A.D.⁵ (Fig. 723). The scene decorating the Icon Painter's Manual of the Stroganov Family combines both iconographic types.⁶ The veil is depicted twice, once held by the Virgin and again spread above her by two angels; the bust of Christ is depicted above it. All types show the vision of the tenth-century St. Andrew the Fool (*Salos*), which he saw in the church of Blachernai in Constantinople, where the vestige was kept. No Byzantine representations of this subject have been preserved. On the contrary, the *Pokrov* was much venerated in Russia since the introduction of its feast (1 October) by the prince Andrej Bogoljubski; he dedicated in 1165 the first church to it near the river Nerl (between Susdal and Bogoljubovo). Several churches followed, among which

¹ Gromova, *Akafist*, 116-121, 131-134, fig. 20, called the red girdle of the Virgin *amofor*, characterised the picture as a cletic scene and recognised in it Evdokija, wife of the Grand Prince Dmitrij Donskoj, who became nun under the name of Efrosin'ja and erected the Monastery of the Ascension in the Moscow Kremlin in 1407; members of her family are also represented in this stanza.

² Stanza 19 is the second scene on the lower row of the icon.

³ On the iconography of *Pokrov*, the earliest representation of which appears on the golden doors of the Cathedral of Susdal (1227-1238), see Lathoud, D., "Le thème iconographique du 'Pokrov' de la Vierge, in *L'art byzantin chez les Slaves: Recueil dédié à la mémoire de Théodore Uspenskij*, préf. de Gabr. Millet, 2 Vols. (Orient et Byzance, Études d'art médiéval, 4-5), Paris, 1930-1932, II, 302-314. Grabar, A., "Une source d'inspiration de l'iconographie byzantine tardive; les ceremonies du culte de la Vierge," *CahArch.*, 25 (1976), 143-162. Smirnova a.o., *Novgorod*, 210-211, no. 9. Belting-Ihm, *Sub matris tutela*, 58-61. Moran, *Singers*, 126-132, figs. 81-84.

⁴ Rozanova, N.V., *Rostov-Suzdal Painting of the 12th-16th Centuries*, Moscow, 1970, no. 67, figs. 67-69, in colour.

⁵ Lazarev, V.N., *Pages from the History of Novgorodian Painting. The Double-Faced Tablets from the St. Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod*, Moscow, 1983, pl. IV.

⁶ *Ikonenmalerbuch*, p. 39. This Manual contains a Menologion with pictures. The manuscript, which is now lost, is from the end of the sixteenth century, but was certainly based on Byzantine models. We know the manuscript from a facsimile edition of 1896, which is reprinted by the Slavonic Institute in Munich: *Ikonenmalerbuch der Familie Stroganow*, München, Autenried, 1965 (1983).

the Rizpoloženiia in Novgorod, built in 1196 A.D., in which also the girdle of the Virgin was venerated.¹

An almost identical iconography to that seen in the Uspenskij icon is found in the St. Ferapont Monastery.² The Virgin is placed within a polygonal wall; she holds no girdle, but has her arms and her mantel spread. In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, the Virgin stands on a pedestal between two groups of nuns and raises her hands in a praying stance; she wears a red girdle³ (Fig. 520).

Stanza 20 (*kondak* 11), the Defeated Hymns, is also painted in a wrong order of sequence in the upper part of the icon⁴ (Figs. 285 and 653). It is decorated in a different iconography than the Byzantine one. Christ, to whom this stanza is addressed, is depicted standing on a low stand in front of a light green tower-like building on a hill. Bishops appear from behind the hill and laud him. In the foreground, a well or basin is surrounded by three figures, one of which seems to take out water; five figures in ecstatic attitude rise from the earth.⁵ A river is depicted in the lower part of the scene. If one follows the text, one could explain the figures in the foreground and the 'riverbanks' with the believers offering *as many odes as grains of sand*. The river in the foreground and the basin in the middle may be explained by *chiretismo* 6-10 of the next stanza (21): *hail to you who make the river of many streams to gush forth; hail to you who depict the pattern of the font; hail, basin that washes clean the conscience; hail, bowl that mixes together delights*. Salikova identified the well and the sands as those in the Monastery of Christ *Philanthropos* in Constantinople, where sick people drank from the water or buried their legs in the sands in order to be miraculously cured.⁶ In a similar but not identical iconography in St. Ferapont, Christ stands on a hill in front of a richer architectonic background⁷ (Figs. 289 and 652). Two bishops, clad in Russian attire, venerate Christ. A hexagonal well is depicted in the lower part of the scene, flanked by two men, a boy and a woman. The

¹ The church is mentioned in the *First Chronicle of Novgorod*, according to which it was decorated by the Greek painter Petrovič: Lazarev, V.N., *Storia della pittura bizantina*, Torino, 1967, 230.

² No reproduction in Danilova, *St. Pherapont*.

³ Stanza 19 is the second scene in the lower row.

⁴ Stanza 20 is picture no. 10, the second scene from above in the right vertical row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). The beginning of the text of this oikos is also written in Greek in the upper right corner.

⁵ Gounaris, Akathistos, 88, thought that the bishops were raising a large icon of Christ *Antiphonites* above a hill, and that the fountain in the foreground represents the baptism.

⁶ Salikova, Akafist, 47-50, fig. 3. Gromova, *Akafist*, 190-196, fig. 21, added to the theory of Salikova that the bishops indicate their cured eyes and ears.

⁷ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 47.

Akathistos icon in St. Petersburg also shows a similar scene¹ (Fig. 295). The number of bishops corresponds to that in the Uspenskij icon but they are depicted as full-size figures, whereas the symmetrical arrangement of the figures around the font is similar to that seen in St. Ferapont.

Stanza 21 (*ikos* 11), the Shining Lamp, is the first scene of the Uspenskij icon² (Figs. 281 and 663). It displays the Virgin standing on a pedestal in front of a dark cave and holding a long candle. Her slender, tall figure rises above the cave. Her head inclines to the left, a feature which is also seen in other figures of the Virgin appearing in this stanza elsewhere. Two groups of figures in supplication are distinguished in the large opening of the cave; they flank the feet of the Virgin. They represent those in darkness to whom the Virgin shines, as mentioned in the text of this stanza. Quite singular is the appearance of the two large figures standing outside the cave and addressing the Virgin; one of them holds an unfurled scroll. They certainly allude to authors praising the Virgin. An almost identical iconography for this stanza has been practised by Dionisij in the St. Ferapont Monastery³ (Figs. 290 and 661). It is also seen in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, but without the two figures above the cave⁴ (Fig. 295). The scene belongs to the symmetrical type of decorating this oikos with the Virgin depicted in the middle of the representation, as seen in Elasson, Matejče, Marko and Valsamonero, but without the two large figures outside the cave flanking the Virgin (Figs. 665-669). The other type of decoration of this stanza reveals an asymmetrical composition with the Virgin depicted to the left and the group of men to the right; it appears in Meronas, Roustika, Ochrid, the Skopelos icon and the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 662, 664, 670-671). The Virgin in the Skopelos icon and the Tomič Psalter is shown turning her head to the left, just as in the Uspenskij icon.

Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12), the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is the last scene in the upper row of the icon⁵ (Figs. 283, 286 and 686). It is decorated with a variant of the Anastasis. Christ descends in the Underworld and pulls Adam out of the cave. Two women are included in the group of figures behind Adam. The woman clad in red may be identified as Eve, while that clad in dark garments cannot be identified with certainty. The attention of Christ is, however, directed to a winged devil in chains painted on the left, from whom he seizes a scroll, the *cheirophonon*. A similar iconography is seen in St. Ferapont, where the secondary figures behind Adam have been omitted⁶ (Figs. 292 and 685). A

¹ Stanza 20 is the third scene of the lower row of the icon.

² Gromova, *Akafist*, 116-121, 128-129, fig. 22.

³ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 73.

⁴ Stanza 21 is the fourth scene of the lower row of the icon.

⁵ Gromova, *Akafist*, 138-140, fig. 24.

⁶ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs. 75-77.

similar scene, but in reverse, is found in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg¹ (Fig. 295).

The text of this stanza discloses that Christ, wishing to cancel our old debts, tore up the *cheirophon*. The tearing up of the *cheirophon* alludes to an old legend, which is also mentioned by St. John Chrysostom. He identified it as the *cheirophon* (the 'contract') that God drew up with Adam, implying the tree of knowledge (Genesis, 2:17); this *cheirophon* was in the possession of Satan.² This stanza is also decorated with a variant of the Anastasis scene in the Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 213, 251 and 683-684). It is, however, only in the Uspenskij icon that the cancellation of the debts and the allusion to the old legend are fully illustrated, the former by the resurrection of Adam and the latter by depicting Satan holding the *cheirophon* and Christ seizing it. In the Tomič Psalter, the *cheirophon* is omitted and only the chaining of Satan is represented³ (Figs. 213 and 683). On the Skopelos icon, neither Satan nor the *cheirophon* are depicted, but only Christ to the left and Adam and Eve in a cave to the right (Figs. 251 and 684). A different iconographic type illustrating this stanza reveals Christ standing as a ruler in the middle of the scene and tearing the *cheirophon*, *our old debts* of the text; he is usually flanked by two groups of figures, occasionally including Adam and Eve (Figs. 676-682).

Stanza 23 (*ikos* 12), celebrating the Virgin as a living temple, is painted before the previous scene⁴ (Figs. 283 and 699). It is embellished with the icon of the Virgin *Dexiokratousa*, painted in the upper part of the façade of a Russian church.⁵ Three bishops on the right and a royal couple on the left laud the Virgin.⁶ A similar composition is found for this stanza in the St. Ferapont Monastery⁷ (Figs. 293 and 700). The decoration of this stanza with a church showing the icon of the Virgin painted on it is the only picture which visualises the characterisation of the Virgin as a temple, mentioned in the text of this stanza; the royal couple is inspired by the fifth *chaitismos*, in which the Virgin is called *precious diadem of reverent kings*, and the clergymen from the sixth *chaitismos* of this stanza, in which the Virgin is greeted as *holy exaltation of dutiful priests*. The Byzantine cycles decorate the first words of this stanza: *we sing your giving birth*. Among the figures praising the Virgin or her icon, one sees clerics, cantors and occasionally an emperor (Figs. 687-698).

¹ Stanza 21 is the fifth scene of the lower row of the icon.

² St. John Chrysostom, *In epistolam ad Colossenses*: PG, 62, 340-341.

³ Džurova, *Tomič Psalter*, I, 118; II, pl. 103, facsimile in colour.

⁴ Stanza 23 is picture no. 4, the fourth scene in the upper row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁵ Salikova, *Akafist*, 50-51, fig. 4.

⁶ Gromova, *Akafist*, 42-47, 77-84, 134-138, fig. 25, characterised this scene as a cletic composition and identified the royal figures as the Grand Prince of Moscow Vasilij Dmitrievič (1389-1425) and his wife Sofija Vitovtovna (d. 1453). One of the prelates should represent the Metropolitan Cyprian.

⁷ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, fig. 77.

In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, this stanza is decorated with a scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin in a procession and therefore belongs to one of the Byzantine types of decorating this stanza.¹ The scene is similar to that used for the Prooemium in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 295 and 276). The procession of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria takes place in the presence of an imperial couple, which flanks the scene. The men participating in the veneration of the icon are clad in colourful garments. The women, seen in the Uspenskij icon, have been omitted.

Stanza 24 (*kondak* 13), the Offering of the Hymn, is illustrated with the procession of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria² (Figs. 278 and 713). A small icon is depicted against a golden background, which also serves as sky. A large figure in red is represented below the icon with outstretched hands. Male and female figures, clad in various costumes, and children in white are represented standing alongside two walls decorated with tapestries in a street with two trees in the background. They make gestures of acclamation in the direction of the icon.³ The veneration of a similar icon of the Virgin also illustrates the Prooemium (*kondak* 1) in this icon, to which an imperial couple is added, as we have already seen (Figs. 276 and 714). The imperial couple also appears in stanza 24 — and not in the Prooemium — in the St. Ferapont Monastery, which is decorated with a similar subject to the Uspenskij icon, but with less figures (Figs. 294 and 715). In the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, the iconography of stanza 24 is similar to all these mentioned here, including its own stanza 23, but the imperial couple is missing⁴ (Fig. 295). We see, thus, a composition for the Prooemium in this icon, which is similar to that found in stanza 24 elsewhere. One may, therefore, not exclude the possibility that an interchange of these two scenes has taken place in the Uspenskij icon. Stanza 24 is also decorated with the veneration of an icon in the Byzantine cycles, but in different compositions (Figs. 706-712).

For the sake of completion I shall remark upon the representation in the centre of the icon, which shows the *Prophets from Above* (the Russian title for this scene is, as already noted, *Pochvala Bogomateri*, the Praise of the Mother of God) (Figs. 271 and 273). The enthroned Virgin holds the Child with both hands in

¹ Stanza 23 is the penultimate scene of the lower row of the icon.

² It is picture no. 14, the fourth one from above on the right side of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

³ Salikova, *Akafist*, 51-54, fig. 5, followed by Gromova, *Akafist*, 42-47, 113-114, fig. 26, associated this scene with a procession of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria that took place every Tuesday in a square in Constantinople: a man with outstretched hands carried a heavy icon of the Virgin on his shoulders.

⁴ Stanza 24 is the last scene in the lower right corner of the icon.

front of her chest in the iconographic type of the so-called *Kyriotissa*.¹ Christ blesses with his outstretched hands. They are surrounded by fourteen figures, which may be mainly identified on the basis of their attributes. The upper two figures can be identified as Jacob holding his ladder (Fig. 272) and as Moses with the burning bush in his hands.² The next figure on the left, showing an elderly prophet with a small red 'jewish' hat, holds an object resembling a box;³ he cannot be identified with certainty. The corresponding figure to the right is similar to the previous one, but his attribute is damaged.⁴ The third figure from above on the left is Ezekiel; he holds a door-shutter, symbolising the closed doors. The outer third figure on the right is Isaiah; he holds the tongs with the burning coal.⁵ The beardless king on the left is Solomon; he carries a light blue object, which may be identified as the house mentioned in Proverbs, 9:1.⁶ The king to the right is David; he bears the Ark of the Covenant.⁷ The attribute of the elderly prophet below Solomon is not visible and therefore, he cannot be identified.⁸ Only a few remnants of the head of the figure below Isaiah on the right are visible. The lower figure to the left, clad in priestly costume, holds a yellow object with black dots on it, which may be identified as a pyxis containing incense. The costume, the long beard and the pyxis suggest that Aaron is depicted here; however, his most characteristic attribute, the flowering rod, is missing.⁹ The young prophet on the right carries a mountain and may be identified as Habakkuk¹⁰ or as Daniel;¹ they both may be portrayed as youths

¹ Tatić-Djurić, M., "L'icône de Kyriotissa," *Actes du XVe Congrès international d'études byzantines, Athènes, 1976, II: Art et Archéologie, Communications*, Athens, 1981, 759-786.

² *Hermeneia*, 146, translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51: Moses holds a bush and says on a scroll: *I have called thee a bush, virgin Mother of God; for I beheld a strange mystery in a bush.*

³ Gromova, *Akafist*, 160, fig. 26, identified him as Aaron holding the Manna. I should like to remark that the Manna is usually placed in a jar and is held by Moses.

⁴ Gromova, *Akafist*, 160, fig. 26, identified him as Samuel with a question mark.

⁵ Isaiah, 6:6: *And there was sent to me one of the seraphs, and he had in his hand a coal, which he had taken off the altar with the tongs.*

⁶ *Wisdom has built a house for herself, and set up seven pillars*, or a couch. *Hermeneia*, 146, translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51: Solomon holds a couch and says on a scroll: *"I foretold thee as a royal couch, O young virgin, proclaiming thy miracle."* Gromova, *Akafist*, 160, fig. 2, asserted that Solomon indicates at a temple supported by the figure below him, identified as Simeon.

⁷ *Hermeneia*, 146, translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51: David holds an ark and says on the scroll: *Looking on the beauty of the temple, I foretold thee as a sacred ark, O young Virgin.*

⁸ Gromova, *Akafist*, 160, fig. 2, identified this figure as Simeon supporting the temple to which Solomon indicates.

⁹ Gromova, *Akafist*, 160, fig. 2, identified this figure as Zacharias.

¹⁰ Habakkuk, 3:3: *God shall come from Thaeman, and the Holy One from the dark shady mount Pharan.* *Hermeneia*, 146, translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51: Habakkuk

and both have as attribute a mountain. The figure in front of the latter prophet has a round beard and holds a staff. Facial features and attribute allow one to identify him as Joseph, whose appearance in this scene is, however, unusual. He is nevertheless frontally depicted in the lower part of the superb twelfth-century icon in the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai, which also represents the *Prophets from Above* with an exceptional large number of Prophets² (Fig. 296). The figure on the outer left in the Uspenskij icon, clad in monk's garments and a turban, is a problematic one. Costume and facial features fit to those of St. John of Damascus,³ but this saint does not appear elsewhere in this subject. The *Hermeneia* describes St. John of Damascus, together with other poets, sitting in one of the corners, below the two domes of the narthex; one of these domes is decorated with the *Prophets from Above*.⁴ It is possible that the artist moved this figure inside this scene. One may also note, that the prefigurations of the Virgin and the *chairetismoi* addressed to her in the writings of St. John of Damascus are innumerable.⁵ Another figure with a turban, which may appear in this composition, is Balaam. He is mentioned in the *Hermeneia* among the prophets surrounding the Virgin. His portrait can be found, e.g., in the Akathistos icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, examined above⁶ (Fig. 295). He is depicted below the Virgin and holds a scroll, on which a similar text to that mention in the *Hermeneia* is written.⁷ The half-bare upper part of his body and the ecstatic position in which he is portrayed have nothing in common with the calmly standing figure in the Uspenskij icon.

One may conclude on the Akathistos cycle of the Uspenskij icon by stating that all scenes of the second part of the cycle are exceptional. The choice of the subject for illustrating the following five stanzas moreover differs from that made in other Byzantine cycles: the Prooemium (*kondak* 1), showing the procession of the icon of the Virgin (Fig. 276); stanza 4 (*kondak* 3),⁸ illustrating the Conception

holds a shady mountain and says on a scroll: "I beheld thee as a providential gift of the spirit, a mountain covered with dense shade."

¹ *Hermeneia*, 146, translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51: Daniel holds a mountain and says on a scroll: "Pure virgin-mother, I foretold thee as a spiritual mountain, from which a stone was cut."

² Soteriou, *Icons*, I, figs. 54-56; II, 73-75. Mouriki, in *Sinai*, 105, notes 26-28 on p. 385, fig. 19 in colour, with a date in the first half of the 12th century. A date to the end of the 12th century seems to me more probable on the base of the linear and mannered style of the figures.

³ I cannot identify the text written on the scroll held by this figure.

⁴ *Hermeneia*, 220.

⁵ For instance in his second homily on the Nativity of the Virgin: *PG*, 96, 692-693.

⁶ Catalogue of the exhibition *Gates of Mystery. The Art of Holy Russia*, ed. by R. Grierson, Cambridge, w.d., no. 80, entry by I. Shalina.

⁷ *Hermeneia*, 282. On Balaam see Timmers, J.J., in *LCI*, 1, 239.

⁸ The illustration of stanza 4 with an Annunciation scene outside Russia is of a later date than the Uspenskij icon, e.g., in Humor, Moldavia, dated 1535 A.D.: Lafontaine-Dosogne,

of Christ with an Annunciation scene (Fig. 279); stanza 13 (*ikos* 7), symbolically depicting the New Creation with a book on a lectern (Fig. 282); stanza 18 (*kondak* 10), illustrating the Salvation of the World with an Helkomenos scene (Fig. 284), and stanza 20 (*kondak* 11), decorating the Presentation of the Odes with a standing Christ and a well in front of him, surrounded by bishops and other figures (Fig. 285).

An almost identical iconography to that seen in the icon is applied, as established above, in several stanzas of the Akathistos cycle in the Monastery of St. Ferapont, painted between 1500 and 1502 by Dionisij and his sons, as already noted. There are, however, also differences between these two Akathistos cycles, not so much in the subject chosen for each stanza, but in the number and the arrangement of the figures in the scenes.¹ These similarities, especially those appearing in scenes with an exceptional iconography, reveal that the two cycles depend on each other; the differences suggest that the frescoes are not directly copied from the icon, but that both cycles have a common archetype. The archetype was naturally executed earlier than our icon, which has been ascribed to the second half of the fourteenth century, as already mentioned above. The iconography applied here deviates from that found in other Byzantine cycles; the subjects are similar in most of the stanzas, but the compositions and the details vary. In the five stanzas recorded above, also the subject that was chosen for decorating them is different. This deviating choice of subject is found in several later cycles in Russia and forms a specific Russian variant of the Akathistos. Its application in the cycles of St. Ferapont and of the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg has been already proved above. I should like to add here two more of the several examples which include the characteristic iconography of what I call the Russian variant of the Akathistos: the wall-paintings in the Uspenskij Sobor in the Moscow Kremlin, originally executed by Dionisij's sons in ca. 1515 A.D. and repainted in the middle of the seventeenth century,² and the wall-paintings in the church Položenija Rizy Božijej Materi vo Vlacherne in the Moscow Kremlin, executed in 1644 A.D. by the painters S. Osipov and I. Borisov.³

This variant may not necessarily have been entirely invented in Russia. Along with the subjects and the iconographic features which are obviously copied from Byzantine cycles, one may add those which have not been preserved in the

Akathiste, 676, fig. 8. Aspra-Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 50, note 108, with more examples of this kind.

¹ I have mentioned these differences in studying the iconography of each of these stanzas above.

² On this church see: Alpatov, M., *Uspenskij Sobor Moskovskogo Kremļa*, Moscow, 1971, with a short text in Russian, English, French and German. Tolstaya, *Assumption Cathedral*.

³ The church of the Deposition of the Robe of the Mother of God in Vlacherne. On this church see Brjusova, V.G., *Russkaja živopis' 17 veka*, Moscow, 1984, 24.

Balkan, but their Greek origin is attested by the *Hermeneia*. Stanzas 14, the Strange Birth, and 17, the Voiceless Orators, in the Uspenskij icon are the closest examples to the description given in the *Hermeneia*, as mentioned above in examining these two stanzas (Figs. 282 and 278).

As regards the irregular sequence of the stanzas in this icon, Gromova tried to explain that in the first upper zone on the bases, among other literary sources, of the novel *Povest' o Temir-Aksake*, about a miracle of the Vladimirskaja icon (Fig. 274): this icon was brought to Moscow in 1395 and saved the city from the attack of Timur (*Temir-Aksak*); the story is based on the Slavonic translation of a Greek narration about the attack of Chosroe on Constantinople.¹ The second row and the middle part of the icon represents, according to Gromova, the theme of the Divine Wisdom (Figs. 271 and 274 bottom); the iconography of these subjects is based on Proverbs 9:1: *Wisdom has built a house for herself*, and the interpretation given to it by Philotheos Kokkinos; the two symmetrical scenes decorating stanzas 15 and 17 (*ikos* 8 and *ikos* 9) continue this subject; they represent the main dogmatic meanings of Christianity, which were formulated by the Nicene Credo; the details of the composition suggest that the literary source was not the Nicene Credo, but one of its interpretations which we may compare to the Confession of the Faith by Gregory Palamas; the artistic method which was used to depict the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost is in harmony with the image from the text *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* by St. John of Damascus.² Gromova also observed the disorder in the lower part of the icon, but she did not try to explain it.³

My explanation of the irregular order of sequence of the stanzas in this icon, which follows, is made independently from the theory of Gromova, because my point of view on the matter differs from hers from the very beginning: whereas her explanation of the disorder presupposes that the artist knew the correct order of sequence of the stanzas and intentionally changed it, my explanation is based on what we see, namely, that the artist did not know the correct order of sequence of the stanzas. My different starting point of view constrains me to commend on her explanation of the disorder or on any other explanation, e.g., theological or liturgical one, which is based on the hypothesis that the artist knew

¹ Gromova, E.B., "Ikongrafičeskaja programma ikony 'Pochvala Bogomateri s Akafistom' kruga Feofana Greka kak otkrazenie russkich istoričeskich sobytij rubeža XIV-XV vekov," *XVIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Summaries of Communications*, Moscow, 1991, 404-405. Gromova, *Akafist*, 127-140. I should like to remark, that one might wonder why not the Vladimirskaja, but a different type of the Virgin, is painted in the middle of the Uspenskij icon.

² Gromova, E.B., "Dogmatičeskie motivy illjustracij strof O i P akafista Bogomateri i ich vozmožnye tekstovye istočniki," *XVIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Summaries of Communications*, Moscow, 1991, 402-403. Gromova, *Akafist*, 165-180, 188-189, 196-203.

³ Gromova, *Akafist*, 72

the correct order of sequence of the stanzas. The following example clearly demonstrates why I do not attempt to explain the disorder of the scenes in this icon by any other theory except the ignorance of the artist concerning the order of sequence of the stanzas: Stanzas 7-11 of the Akathistos deal with the Adoration of the shepherds (stanza 7), the Journey of the Magi (stanza 8), the Adoration of the Magi (stanza 9), their Return to Babylon (stanza 10), and finally with the Flight into Egypt (stanza 11). The scenes decorating these stanzas are painted in the lower zone of the icon in the following disorder (Figs. 275, 280 and 346-347): The Adoration of the shepherds (stanza 7), the Adoration of the Magi (stanza 9), the Flight into Egypt (11), the Journey of the Magi (8) and their Return to Babylon (10). They display, thus, the following disorder: 7 - 9 - 11 - 8 and 10. I cannot think of any theory that could explain why the Magi should first adore the Child and then travel for this purpose, after the holy family had left for Egypt.

I shall, therefore, attempt to explain how the disorder of the stanzas in this icon came about in another way: If one looks at Akathistos cycles painted in churches, especially domed ones, one shall notice that the stanzas are often scattered in various parts of the church. In the church of the St. Ferapont Monastery, e.g., the scenes of the Akathistos are painted on walls, vaults and piers, but only in a partial order of sequence.¹ If we copy these scenes one after the other, we shall get not only one, but several variants of disorder.² I suggest, therefore, that the artist of the icon copied a cycle from a church. I have already stated, that my starting point of view is, judging from what our artist produced, that he did not know the correct order of sequence of the Akathistos scenes. His creation also implies that he painted an Akathistos cycle for the first time in his life and that he was unable to read the verses on the scenes from which he copied, or identify them. The disability of the artist to read or identify the stanzas may be explained by various reasons: The scenes were painted in a church at a height which enabled the artist to distinguish the figures which composed every scene, but not the verses, if they were written on the scenes. Another possibility is that the verses were written in a language which the artist could not understand; I think here of a Greek artist rather, who could not read the Russian text, than vice versa. In the worst case, the artist could be a Russian who could

¹ Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, scheme II on p. 58, showing the arrangement of the Akathistos scenes in this church. Only a partial order of sequence of the Akathistos scenes is also seen in the Panagia Olympiotissa in Elasson: Constantinides, *Elasson*, I, 84-90, drawings XII and XIV.

² I was not surprised to notice that even Danilova, *St. Pherapont*, figs 69-70, interchanged by mistake *ikos 7* with *ikos 8*. It is difficult to place the 24 scenes of the Akathistos in the correct order of sequence, especially of the second part of it, without the help of a printed text of the Akathistos in hand and without being able to read at least a characteristic part of the text of the stanzas, which fortunately is often written on the scenes. This may also be true for the scholars who already have studied the Akathistos cycle, and even more for those who see one for the first time.

not place the Russian verses he read in the right order, the more because the stanzas of the Slavonic Akathistos do not form an alphabetic acrostic — which the Greek Akathistos does — and consequently do not provide any clue for the order of sequence of the stanzas.

That an artist does not iconographically master all subjects does not necessarily mean that his artistic abilities are also wanting. On the contrary, the painter of the Uspenskij icon succeeded in creating a masterpiece that fascinates every onlooker with its beauty and grandeur, arousing admiration and appreciation. This is certainly not only due to the impressive dimensions of the icon — approximately two meters high, as already noted — but also to the rich colour scale used by the artist, his ability to paint with equal success large and small figures, and, according to the requirements of the subject, simple or complex scenes, in balanced or asymmetrical compositions; his figures are static or in a state of motion, extending from elegant to agitating, accordingly expressing dignity, grace or pathos. His proliferation for detail is manifested in several tiny figures and decorative elements, present in the various scenes; this is certainly true also in his choice to paint a great number of figures in a scene, more than that other artist represented on an even larger surface, e.g., Dionisij in the St. Ferapont Monastery. The few perceptible deficiencies of our painter, e.g., in the shepherds of scene 21 and the horses of the scenes 9 and 24-25, do not reduce much from the superb general appearance of his creation.

As regards the nationality of the artist, I have already mentioned above that several attributions have been suggested by various scholars, which means that it cannot be determined with certainty. The characterisation of the icon as Russian is based on the iconography of this Akathistos cycle, which, as I have already emphasised, forms a particular variant of the Akathistos, manifested in Russia. I think, therefore, that this icon was made in Russia, but I cannot express with certainty an opinion on the nationality of the artist; I have insinuated above a Greek artist, but I will not object to any different opinion, e.g., a Russian artist working under Byzantine influence, which will be better documented than mine.

THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE 24 STANZAS

Stanza 1 (A), the Annunciation (Figs. 352-368)

A leading angel was sent from heaven to say to the Virgin: "Hail". And when he saw you, O Lord, becoming flesh, he was amazed and arose and cried to her with voice incorporeal: (chairetismoi follow).

The Annunciation scene showing a flying angel approaching the Virgin may be considered as the most accurate illustration for this stanza, because it also visualises that the angel was sent from heaven, as stated in the text.¹ It is depicted in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, showing a sitting Virgin (Figs. 192, 216 and 352-353). A maiden is added to both Psalters, recalling certain representations of the Annunciation to Anne.² In the Skopelos icon the Virgin holds a book in her hand, which is a rare iconographic detail for Byzantine Annunciation scenes and, therefore, suggests Western influence (Figs. 236 and 354). A flying angel also appears in the church of the Virgin in Cozia and in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 255, 279, 355 and 357). In both scenes the Annunciation at the Well is represented. The Annunciation at the Well is mentioned neither in the Akathistos nor in the Gospel of Luke, 1:26-28, but in the Protoevangelion or Book of James, Chapter XI, 1-2: The Virgin took the pitcher and went forth to fill it with water; she heard a voice saying: Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed are thou among women. Filled with trembling she went to her house, where the angel of the Lord made the 'second and actual' Annunciation. Representations of the Annunciation at the Well, however, decorate even the Annunciation passage of the Gospel of Luke, which they should not do, e.g., in the Constantinopolitan Tetraevangelion Par. gr. 74, fol. 105vo, from the third quarter of the eleventh century.³

¹ For the decoration of the first three stanzas, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 671-674. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 16-18 and 43. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 42-49. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 139-142. For the iconography of the Annunciation see: Braunfels, W., *Die Verkündigung*, Düsseldorf, 1949. Weitzmann, *Verkündigungssikone*. Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, I, 44-63. Wellen, *Theotokos*, 37-44. Emminghaus, J.H., in *LCI*, 4, 422-437, s.v. *Verkündigung an Maria*. Kitzinger, *Annunciation*, 99-115.

² Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 672-673.

³ *Évangiles avec peintures byzantines du XIe siècle. Reproduction des 361 miniatures du manuscrit grec 74 de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, 2 vols., Paris, n.d., II, pl. 93.

An Annunciation at the Well with a striding angel, instead of a flying one, appears in Roustika and Meronas (Figs. 1, 25, 360 and 362). It is also seen in the Tomič Psalter, but for stanza 3 (Figs. 112 and 361).

A striding angel approaching a standing Virgin, without the addition of a well, is painted in Marko, where both figures show a vivid motion, and in the Kremlin icon, where the figures are more restrained (Figs. 112, 148 and 363-364). An angel approaching a Virgin, this time sitting in an antithetical position, is depicted in Valsamonero, St. Ferapont, and the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, (Figs. 37, 148, 170 and 365-368).

The *Hermeneia* states that the angel descends from the sky and blesses the Virgin sitting and spinning red silk.¹

Stanza 2 (B), the Annunciation (Figs. 369-385)

The holy lady, seeing herself to be chaste, spoke boldly to Gabriel: "The paradox of your words I find hard for my soul to accept; what do you mean when you speak of childbirth from a conception without seed, crying Alleluia?"

This stanza is also decorated with an Annunciation scene, showing the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin, the latter depicted either standing or sitting. In the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, a sitting maiden witnesses the Annunciation (Figs. 199, 217, 372 and 381). In St. Ferapont, the Annunciation at the Well illustrates this stanza with a flying angel approaching the Virgin, a detail that fits better stanza 1, as already noted (Figs. 358).

The *Hermeneia* describes both figures standing and holding scrolls on which their dialogue is written.² Thus, it differs from the representations which one finds during the Paleologan era.

Stanza 3 (Γ), the Annunciation (Figs. 386-401)

The Virgin, yearning to grasp a knowledge unknowable, cried to the ministering angel: "How can a son be born of chaste loins, tell me?" He himself spoke to her in fear; yet this he cried: (chairetismoi follow).

This is the third consequent stanza of the Akathistos painted with an Annunciation scene. It is decorated in a similar manner to stanzas 1-2, and similar exceptions, like the appearance of a flying angel and the well, seen in

¹ *Hermeneia*, 147; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

² *Hermeneia*, 148; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

Matejče, Marko and the Tomič Psalter, in which the maidens witnessing the Annunciation increased to three (Figs. 93, 114, 194 and 386-388).

The *Hermeneia* describes both figures standing and holding, like in the previous oikos, scrolls on which their dialogue is written.¹

In the text of stanzas 2 and 3, the Virgin expresses her doubts on the words of the angel. One cannot ascertain that the words *cried* and the imperative *tell me* in stanza 3 are more expressive than *spoke boldly* and *hard to accept* in stanza 2. A climax in the dialogue between the Virgin and the angel may only hypothetically be suggested on the basis that the task of Gabriel is fulfilled in stanza 3. The doubts of the Virgin are often rendered in the pictures by portraying her with raised hand, either standing or sitting. Her gestures may occasionally be more expressive in stanza 3 than in stanza 2, e.g., in Roustika (Figs. 2-3). In the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, however, her gestures are identical in both stanzas; it is here the angel who shows more motion in stanza 3, presumably because he utters the *chairetismoi* concluding this stanza (Figs. 149-150, 171-172, 374, 376, 397 and 399). In the Kremlin icon, the Virgin is shown standing without expressive gestures in all three Annunciation scenes. The posture of the Virgin raising high her hand in doubt, a feature practically unknown in Annunciation scenes from the Dodekaorton, was possibly borrowed from the Doubts of Joseph, as seen, e.g., in Marko (Figs. 113, 116, 373 and 443).

Stanza 4 (Δ), the Conception of Christ (Figs. 402-419)

Then the power of the All-highest overshadowed her, planning the conception of one without experience of marriage; and she showed forth² her fruitful womb as a sweet field for all who would harvest salvation by singing thus: Alleluia.

The pictures decorating this stanza³ suggest the following evolution of this subject: It was initially embellished with an Annunciation scene, which is the visualisation of the conception of Christ *par excellence*. It is found in the Uspenskij icon and the St. Ferapont Monastery (Figs. 279 and 291). The artists were obviously bothered by the appearance of the Annunciation for a fourth time,

¹ *Hermeneia*, 148; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

² The subject of the verb ὑπερέβειξεν is the *power of the All-highest* rather than the Virgin; but I leave the philologists to decide, who most probably will never read this note (see the Greek text of the Akathistos at the end of this book).

³ For the decoration of stanza 4, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 674-677. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 18-19 and 43-44. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 49-54. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 142-145.

next to the three Annunciations decorating the first three stanzas. A simple solution is seen in the Synodal Akathistos, repeated in its copy in Escorial (Figs. 151 and 173): The Virgin is shown standing and the Power of the All-highest, mentioned in this stanza, is represented in the form of three beams descending from a segment in gradations of blue; the beam in the middle ends in a disk, from which three additional beams descend in the direction of the Virgin. In the next stage, seen in Cozia (Fig. 136), the beam in the middle was transformed to a mandorla in blue; it surrounds the Virgin and visualises that the Power of the All-highest *overshadowed her*. Finally, a clipeus with the bust of the Child was added on the chest of the Virgin in the mandorla, with which also the word *conception* was brought in picture.¹ It is seen in the Tomič Psalter, while in the Skopelos icon the Child itself is represented² (Figs. 195, 237 and 407-408).

However, another variant prevailed as decoration of this stanza, if one may judge from the number of the pictures which have been preserved: It is characterised by a large veil, usually held by maidens and occasionally by angels behind the enthroned Virgin³ (Figs. 409-419). The Serbian Psalter reveals a phase of transition: the segment and the broad beam in blue descending from it, reminiscent of the previous variant, are still essential, but the veil held by maidens behind the Virgin is also added to the scene (Figs. 219 and 409). In Dečani, one also sees in the upper part the middle beam descending on the head of the Virgin and the Holy Ghost, painted in a rhomboid in the shape of a dove, which is visible only in this picture (Figs. 311 and 410). However, it is the lower part with four maidens holding the veil that gained in importance, as also seen, often clearer, in other depictions of this stanza (Figs. 411-419). Finally, this iconographic type was also used for oikos 13, the New Creation, in the Monastery of the Hodegetria (Figs. 64-65); the Child was also added there, held by the Virgin who kisses its hand.

Worthy of mentioning here is that in an unprecedented iconography for the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, a veil is held by maidens behind the small figure of the young Virgin (Fig. 297); it appears in the Katholikon of the Chelandari Monastery on Mount Athos, ascribed to ca. 1320 A.D.⁴

¹ The entire text of stanza 4 has as follows: *Then the power of the Highest overshadowed her, planning the conception of one without experience of marriage; and she showed forth her fruitful womb as a sweet field for all who would harvest salvation by singing thus: Alleluia.*

² The Child in a clipeus usually denotes that it is still unborn, as it is well known.

³ For the symbolism of the veil in Late antiquity and Byzantium, in imperial and church ceremonies, see: Grabar, A., "L'iconographie de la Parousie," *Lex Orandi*, Paris, 1966, reprinted in *Idem, L'art de la fin de l'antiquité et du moyen-âge*, I, 569-582, esp. 577. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 674-677. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 143-144. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 50 ff, note 125. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 77-87.

⁴ Acheimastou-Potamianou, M., *Byzantine Wall-Paintings*, Athens, 1994, 250, fig. 148 in colour. On Chilandari, see Djurić, *Fresken*, 74, 264 n55, with bibliography and the various

The *Hermeneia* describes the decoration of this oikos as follows: *The Virgin is seated on a throne, while two angels on either side of her hold a large veil behind her reaching from top to bottom. Above her the Holy Spirit descends, surrounded by much light and many clouds.*¹ It is obvious that the model for the *Hermeneia* was the last type discussed above; angels holding the veil have survived in the Cretan churches at Valsamonero and Vori, and in Ochrid (Figs. 40, 413-414) — and in Post-byzantine cycles of the Akathistos² — while in other churches they are substituted by maidens.

Stanza 5 (E), the Visitation (Figs. 420-432)

The Virgin, holding God in her womb, hastened to Elisabeth. And Elisabeth's little child knew at once her embrace, and rejoiced, and with leaps like songs cried to the mother of God: (chaitismoi follow).

This stanza naturally is decorated with the Visitation, symbolising the first earthly recognition of the immaculate conception of the Virgin by Elisabeth.³ A maiden witnesses this recognition in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 196, 219 and 279). In Matejče and Valsamonero two maidens have been added to the scene (Figs. 94 and 41). The Virgin is generally shown taller than Elisabeth and in garments of different colours, habitually purple for the Virgin and red for Elisabeth; the halos may also occasionally be of different colour.

The *Hermeneia* adds Joseph and Zacharias talking to each other to the two figures of the Visitation, as well as a child with a stick on his shoulders with a basket hanging from it.⁴

theories on the painter of the frescoes. Colour reproductions also in Bogdanović, D., Djurić, V.J., Medaković, D., *Chilandar*, Belgrade, 1978, 81 ff., figs. 59-65.

¹ *Hermeneia*, 148; translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

² Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 50.

³ Luke, 1:39-56. *Protoevangelion*, XII, 2-3. For the iconography of the Visitation see Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, I, 65-67. Lechner, M., in *LCl*, 2, 229-235, s.v. *Heimsuchung Mariens*. Wessel, K., in *RbK*, II, 1093-1099, s.v. *Heimsuchung*. For the decoration of stanza 5, see: Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 677-678. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 19-20 and 44. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 54-55.

⁴ *Hermeneia*, 148; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

Stanza 6 (Z), the Doubts of Joseph (Figs. 433-448)

Joseph, a prudent man, was troubled within himself by a tumult of cares and doubts. He saw you unwedded and suspected illicit love, lady of no blame. But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia."

The figures of Joseph and the Virgin reveal in this stanza various gradation of emotion.¹ The doubts of Joseph are occasionally expressed more emphatically, by means of an agitated movement of his body or a vivid gesture, e.g., in Valsamonero, the Hodegetria Monastery and the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 42, 61, 221, 434-435 and 448). In the Synodal Akathistos and its copy in Escorial, he utters despair by raising both hands high (Figs. 153 and 175). The feelings of the Virgin vary from innocence to strong protest. The former can be best observed in Roustika, where she bends her head and discloses a restrained movement of the body (Figs. 6 and 436). In most of the pictures she has a defensive stance, but in Valsamonero she rises from her seat in protest (Figs. 42 and 435). In Marko, she strongly protests against the accusations of Joseph by raising her hand high, a gesture that is also found in the Kremlin icon (Figs. 116, 263, 443-444).

The bust of the Child is painted in grisaille in a clipeus on the chest of the Virgin in the Kremlin icon. It visualises the word *conception*, written in the last verse of this stanza. This feature was copied from an Annunciation scene, as seen in the Sinai and the Ustjuk Annunciation icons and twice in the Kremlin icon² (Figs. 301-302, 719, 255-256).

The most suitable scene for this stanza is possibly that seen in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 275 and 441). In showing Joseph slightly bending in front of the Virgin and standing in a lower level than her, it renders his acceptance of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, as written in the most significant verse of this stanza: *But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia."*

Joseph is exceptionally depicted twice in Cozia: once seated and deepened in his thoughts and again reproaching the Virgin, with which his cares and

¹ This scene derives from the pictorial cycle of the Life of the Virgin: Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Life of the Virgin*, 190-191. For the decoration of stanza 6, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 678-679. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 20 and 44-45. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 55-56.

² For the Sinai icon, see Weitzmann, *Verkündigungssikone*, *passim*. Mouriki, D. in *Sinai*, 107-108, 385 note 36, with extensive bibliography. Vokotopoulos, *Icons*, 202, figs. 49-50. In the Ustjuk Annunciation icon, ascribed to Novgorod and now in the Tretjakov Gallery in Moscow, dated ca. 1200 A.D., the Child on the chest of the Virgin is neither placed in a medallion, nor painted in grisaille, but it still represents the unborn Christ, because it is not held by the Virgin but sways. Onasch, K., *Ikonen*, Berlin, 1961, 15f. Good colour reproductions of this icon are published by Salko, N., *Early Russian Painting, 11th to Early 13th Centuries. Mosaics, Frescoes, Icons*, Leningrad, 1982, pls. 182-185.

doubts, mentioned at the beginning of this stanza, are better visualised (Figs. 137 and 433).

The *Hermeneia* describes Joseph leaning on his staff and angrily stretching out his hand to the Virgin.¹

Stanza 7 (H), the Adoration of the Shepherds (Figs. 449-466)

The shepherds heard the angels singing of the incarnate presence of Christ; and, running as if to their shepherd, they saw him, a blameless lamb, pastured in Mary's womb; and in praise of her they cried: (chaitetismoï follow).

This stanza is decorated with the Nativity of Christ,² which may be divided into two categories, one with an emphasis on the shepherds listening to the angels, and the other showing them approaching the Child. The former category decorates the first part of this stanza; any Nativity scene including shepherds could be used for this variant, as the preserved examples reveal (Figs. 450-454). The artist of the Kremlin icon painted, next to a Nativity scene without shepherds and angels, an additional scene showing only shepherds and angels; it is inscribed with the beginning of this stanza (Figs. 264-265 and 449).

The second category illustrates the last part of this stanza; almost all examples of this type, which are more numerous than those of the first one, significantly display the shepherds approaching Christ and consequently denote that the Nativity scene was adapted to fit this stanza; they occasionally indicate in the direction of the angels (Figs. 457-465). The artist of the Uspenskiy icon, in order to emphasise the shepherds, excluded all other figures and painted two shepherds exulting the Virgin and the Child in the cave (Figs. 275 and 456). In Marko the Magi, but no shepherds, are included in the Nativity scene, which means that the artist copied an arbitrary Nativity scene, without paying attention to the text of this stanza (Figs. 117 and 466).

The *Hermeneia* advises the artists to paint for this oikos the Nativity of Christ, but to leave out the Magi.³

¹ *Hermeneia*, 148; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

² The main literary sources for the Nativity are: Matthew, 1:18-25; Luke, 2:1-20; the *Protoevangelion* of James, chapters 17-20, and the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, chapters 13-14. On the iconography of the Nativity, see mainly Millet, *Recherches*, 93-166. Weitzmann, *Castelseprio*, 53-57 and 71-73. Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, I, 69-99. Ristow, *Geburt Christi*. *Idem*, in *RbK*, II, 637-662, s.v. *Geburt Christi*. Wilhelm, P., in *LCl*, 2, 86-103, s.v. *Geburt Christi*. For the decoration of stanza 7, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 679-681. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 20-21 and 45. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 56-59.

³ *Hermeneia*, 148; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

Stanza 8 (Θ), the Journey of the Magi (Figs. 467-482)

The Wise Men saw a star moving towards God, and followed its lustre, held it as a lantern, and by it searched for the mighty king. And, when they reached him whom no man can reach, they were joyful, and cried to him "Alleluia".

In most of the cycles, the three Magi are painted on horseback in a mountainous landscape.¹ They are shown in various stances, including a gesture in the direction of the star, which is often depicted large. An edifice has been added behind them in the Kremlin icon (Fig. 471), presumably to denote their departure place, in analogy to the depiction of the city of Babylon to which they returned in stanza 10.²

A flying angel showing the way to the Magi is added in Roustika, next to the star that is reduced here to a tiny one, painted in a segment in the upper right corner of the scene (Fig. 8). A flying angel completely substituted the star in Meronas (Fig. 29). The artists in Dečani, Marko and the Serbian Psalter went a step further: they painted a flying archangel on horseback; he points to the star (Figs. 91, 118 and 223).

The Magi on horseback approach the Nativity cave with the Virgin, the Infant and other figures, which appear by exception in Matejče, and in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 97, 199, 223, 478-479 and 481). In this manner, also the last verses of this stanza are visualised, in which one reads that the Magi reached Christ.

The *Hermeneia* describes the Journey of the Magi in front of a landscape with mountains; the Magi on horseback point the bright star out to each other.³

Stanza 9 (I), the Adoration of the Magi (Figs. 483-497)

The sons of the Chaldaeans saw in the Virgin's hands him who with his hand created men; they recognised him as master, although he had taken the shape of a slave, and hastened to do him grace with gifts, and cry to the blessed virgin: (chaitetismoï follow).

¹ The story of the Magi with three scenes, as in the *Akathistos* cycle, or with more scenes already appeared in manuscripts from the eleventh century, e.g. Par. gr. 74, Laurent. VI, 23, Vat. gr. 1156 and Jerusalem, Taphou 14. They are listed by Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 59, note 211. See also Lafontaine-Dosogne, J., "L'illustration du cycle des mages suivant l'Homélie sur la Nativité attribuée à Jean Damascène," *Le Muséon*, 100 (1987), 211-224. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 88-91. For the decoration of stanza 8, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 681-683. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 22-23 and 45-46. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 59-62.

² The decoration of stanza 10 in this icon, however, does not show a city, but the Magi riding in front of a mountainous landscape only (Fig. 268).

³ *Hermeneia*, 148; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

The Magi are usually depicted on foot while approaching the enthroned Virgin with the Child.¹ An architectonic element is painted behind them in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 200 and 483). A low wall appears behind the Magi in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 240 and 484). An aedicula behind a higher wall and an octagonal building behind the enthroned Virgin have been added in Roustika (Figs. 9 and 485). A wall also appears in Matejče, but behind it one sees a unique iconographic feature in the decoration of this stanza: A groom with a peculiar headgear holds the reins of the horses on which the Magi arrived (Figs. 98 and 486). An angel, appearing from behind a column, introduces the Magi in St. Nicholas Orphanos (Figs. 82 and 487). Another angel, more impressive through his size, imperial garments and spread wings, introduces them in Dečani (Figs. 91 and 488). In Marko, the angel is also clad in imperial garments, but he stands behind the throne of the Virgin (Figs. 119 and 489). Both kinds of landscape appear in the background of these two pictures: a rocky one behind the Magi and a building suggesting a church behind the Virgin. An angel also appears in the Serbian Psalter, but now as a half figure to the left of the frontally enthroned Virgin, whereas the Magi are painted on the other side (Figs. 224 and 490). This scene also includes Joseph sitting in a pensive pose in the foreground, which is a unique detail for this stanza; the entire scene is painted under an arch, which is also a unique case. The differentiation of the background in a rocky one behind the Magi and an architectural one behind the Virgin also appears in the Uspenskij and Kremlin icons and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 491-493). In Cozia, the Magi approach the enthroned Virgin with the Child in a deserted place, in front of a mountainous landscape (Figs. 139 and 494). The Virgin with the Child receives the Magi sitting at the entrance of the cave of the Nativity in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 158, 178, 495 and 497). Finally, the Magi approach with their horses the enthroned Virgin with the Child in front of a mountainous landscape in Valsamonero and the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 45, 62 and 496). Two of the Magi in Valsamonero appear on horseback in front of the Virgin, which is an exceptional feature for this scene.

The *Hermeneia* describes this scene with the Virgin on a throne holding the Infant; the Magi kneel in front of her, while the star sheds light from above; the figure of Joseph is added behind the Virgin and a young man holding the horses by the bridles outside the house.² Among the preserved cycles, Joseph, but in a pensive attitude in front of the Virgin, appears in the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 224 and 490) and a servant holding the horses of the Magi by the bridles is seen in Matejče (Figs. 98 and 486).

¹ For the decoration of stanza 9, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 683-684. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 23-24 and 46. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 62-66.

² *Hermeneia*, 148; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 51.

Stanza 10 (K), the Return of the Magi to Babylon (Figs. 498-512)

The Wise Men became heralds, bearing the message of God, and returned to Babylon, fulfilling your prophecy. They proclaimed you the Christ to all men, and abandoned Herod as a fool not knowing how to sing "Alleluia".

The Return of the Magi to Babylon¹ may be divided into two categories, each of which reveals an evolution. The first one in its simplest form shows the Magi on horseback in front of a mountainous landscape. It appears in the Uspenskij icon, the St. Ferapont Monastery and the Kremlin icon (Figs. 498-500). A flying angel has been added to the scene in Cozia (Fig. 139 and 502). He is probably an allusion to Matthew, 2:12, who mentions that the Magi were warned by God in a dream to avoid Herod, and that they returned to their country by another way. The last verse of this stanza also mentions that the Magi *abandoned Herod as a fool*.

The next step displays them approaching a fortified city with the personification of Babylon as a female figure at the gate, which appears only in the Cretan churches in Roustika, Valsamonero and the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 10, 46, 63, 501 and 503). This type was partially inspired by the Flight into Egypt, in which Egypt is also represented as a fortified city, often with a personification at the gates. An angel points to the personification in Valsamonero. The citizens of Babylon come out of the city to welcome the Magi in St. Nicholas Orphanos (Figs. 84 and 504). More people salute the Magi in Matejče, added on the walls of the city (Figs. 99 and 506). In Dečani the Magi arrive over a bridge (Figs. 313 and 505).

The second variant lacks the triumphal character of the previous one and shows the Magi on foot entering a fortified city; it is seen in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 155, 179, 241 and 507-509). An enthroned emperor receives the Magi in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 201, 226 and 510-511). The Magi are curiously missing from this scene in Marko: a groom leads their horses to three men who are clad in unusual garments, possibly illustrating the last verse of this stanza, in which it is mentioned that the Magi *abandoned Herod as a fool not knowing how to sing Alleluia*² (Figs. 120 and 512).

The *Hermeneia* describes Babylon as a fortified city with a gatekeeper looking out; the Magi on horseback are led to the city by an angel.³ No gatekeeper is found in the scenes examined above, but the personification of

¹ For the decoration of stanza 10, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 684-687. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 24-26 and 46-47. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 66-68.

² Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 25-26, fig. 93.

³ *Hermeneia*, 149. An English translation by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

Babylon in Crete, and several figures receiving the Magi elsewhere; an angel leading the Magi appears in Cozia and Valsamonero.

Stanza 11 (Λ), the Flight into Egypt (Figs. 513-527)

By flashing the light of truth in Egypt you banished the darkness of error; for her idols, Saviour, did not withstand your strength, and fell, and those who were saved from them cried to the mother of God: (chairetismoi follow).

The iconography of the Flight into Egypt for this stanza follows in general that applied for the Christological cycle, which may be divided into two categories as regards the positioning of the Child.¹ The first one, which is meant to have a triumphal character but does not always have one, shows Christ on the shoulders of Joseph, who precedes or follows the Virgin. In the second category, Christ is carried by the Virgin, sitting on a pack animal; this type is found more often in the depictions that have been preserved, possibly because they decorate her hymn. Joseph leads the procession more often than the Virgin and James. Egypt is represented as a fortified city with the idols regularly depicted falling from the ramparts. The personification of the city is mostly shown in imperial garments, but in Roustika in eastern ones with a turban. In the Skopelos and the Kremlin icons, Joseph is shown entering the city, by which no place was left for the personification of the city or other people (Figs. 242, 269 and 524-525).

The most appropriate depiction for this stanza is that seen in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 202 and 514). Christ on the shoulders of Joseph, who is followed by the Virgin and James, is surrounded by a radiating halo; this detail visualises *the light of truth*, mentioned in the first verse; the falling idols are also depicted. A similar iconography is also seen in the Serbian Psalter, but the radiating halo is missing (Figs. 225 and 513).

A singular iconography was applied for this stanza in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 159, 181 and 526-527). Instead of the Flight into Egypt, the Virgin is portrayed alone, without the Child, standing in front of the fortified city of Egypt, from the walls of which idols fall. In the Escorial manuscript, beams of light extend from the half mandorla of the Virgin in the direction of Egypt, which are inspired by the first words of this stanza: *By flashing the light of truth in Egypt*. The artist unfortunately did not notice that this oikos is

¹ For the iconography of the Flight into Egypt see: Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, I, 127-135. *LCI*, 2, 43-51. Réau, 2, 273-288. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Infancy*, 226-229. For the decoration of stanza 11, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 687-689. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 26-28 and 47. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 147-149. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 68-71. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 147-149.

addressed to Christ, whom he totally omitted from the scene by mistake. The two men in the scene possibly visualise the last words of this oikos: *and those who were saved from them (the idols) cried to the mother of God: (chairetismoi follow)*.

In Marko, a number of unique iconographical details have been added to the scene, namely three maidens, two camels and, more important, an architectural construction in the lower right corner of the scene, possibly alluding to the temple in Sotinen, where 365 idols fell at the appearance of the Virgin with the Child¹ (Figs. 121 and 518).

The *Hermeneia* refers for the decoration of this oikos to the description of the Flight into Egypt, in which the fall of the idols is included.²

Stanza 12 (M), the Hypapante (Figs. 528-543)

When Simeon was about to depart from his life of deceit, you were given to him as an infant, but you were made known to him as a perfect God; and so he was astounded at your limitless wisdom, and cried "Alleluia".

This scene reveals almost all the iconographical variations found in the Christological cycle.³ The Child is occasionally held by the Virgin (Figs. 537-541), but more often by Simeon, which fits better the text of this stanza. The Prophetess Anna stands behind Simeon, but also near Joseph and the Virgin (Figs. 533-534 and 542-543); she is sporadically omitted from the scene, as in Roustika, and hidden in Cozia (Figs. 531-532). Joseph is exceptionally placed behind Simeon in the Uspenskij icon (Fig. 536). The scene is sometimes restricted to the main protagonists, as in the Skopelos icon and in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 528-530). Quite unusual is the appearance of a sitting figure reading a book in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 542-543). Lafontaine-Dosogne observed that this figure recalls Joachim consulting the books of the twelve tribes.⁴ Stichel thought that the artist mistakenly copied

¹ *Liber de Infantia* or Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, 22-23, translated by Elliott, *Apocryphal N.T.*, 96

² *Hermeneia*, 87 and 149.

³ Luke, 2:22-39. For the iconography of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple see: Shorr, *Presentation in the Temple*, 17-32. Wessel, K., in *RbK*, I, 1134-1145, *s.v. Darstellung Christi im Tempel*. Lucchesi Palli, E., in *LCI*, 1, 473-477. Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, I, 100-104, *s.v. Darbringung Jesu im Tempel*. Maguire, *Iconography of Simeon*, 261-269. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 84-90. Mouriki, *Nea Moni*, I, 132-134. For the decoration of stanza 12, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 689-690. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 28-30 and 47. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 71.

⁴ Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 689.

the writing Zacharias from the Birth of St. John the Baptist and represented him here as Joseph.¹

The *Hermeneia* refers for the decoration of this oikos to the description of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. It belongs to the iconographic type in which Simeon holds the Child, which blesses him; the Prophetess Anna is placed near Joseph.² The closest parallels to this description are seen in Meronas and Valsamonero (Figs. 48 and 533).

Stanza 13 (N), the New Creation (Figs. 544-558)

The Creator revealed a new creation, and showed it to us, his creatures. He made it flourish from a womb without seed which he kept chaste, as it had been before, so that we might see the miracle and sing her praises, saying: (chaitismoi follow).

This stanza is illustrated either with the Virgin with the Child or with Christ alone, both venerated by various groups of men.³ The first type fits better the text, in which not only Christ but also the Virgin is mentioned. In the Synodal and the Escorial Akathistos manuscripts, the Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon, the Virgin with the Child is depicted enthroned on one side of the picture and a group of men, presumably Apostles, on the other side (Figs. 544-547). In other cycles, the Virgin is depicted in the middle of the scene and symmetrically flanked by men, Apostles and saints in Ochrid,⁴ monks in the Cretan churches in Roustika and Valsamonero,⁵ and unidentifiable ones in the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 548-551). The Virgin is depicted standing instead of sitting in the middle of the scene in Cozia; she holds the Child in a rhomboid and is flanked by priests (Figs. 141 and 552).

The second type illustrates the first words of the text of this stanza and displays Christ, either as an adult person or as Emmanuel.⁶ The first variant is found in the Panagia *ton Chalkeon* and in Marko, where he is flanked by Apostles and young saints in the former church and by Apostles and monastic

¹ Stichel in Dufrenne a.o., *Serbische Psalter*, I, 263-264.

² *Hermeneia*, 87.

³ For the decoration of stanza 13, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 31 and 47-48. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 72-75.

⁴ This scene decorates oikos 14 in Ochrid, but it fits better oikos 13.

⁵ This scene decorates oikos 14 in Valsamonero, but it fits better oikos 13.

⁶ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 31, 47-48 and 64, thought that only Christ was represented in this oikos and that the second part of it, mentioning the Virgin, has been disregarded by the artists. However, we have seen above that this oikos in Crete and elsewhere is also decorated with the Virgin. A more complete approach on this and several other oikoi, has been made by Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 72-75.

saints in the latter (Figs. 123 and 553-554). Christ Emmanuel is seen in Dečani, flanked by young men, possibly saints (Fig. 556). He is shown standing in a mandorla in Matejče, also flanked by young men (Figs. 102 and 557).

Quite exceptional is the iconography applied in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 282 and 558). Christ shows a Gospel Book on a lectern (the New Creation) to a group of men, presumably Apostles.

The *Hermeneia* positions Christ upon a cloud, surrounded by the symbols of the four Evangelists, and below apostles, martyrs, bishops and all kinds of saints.¹ Most of the cycles show Christ or the Virgin with the Child 'on earth' flanked by saints.

Stanza 14 (Ξ), the Strange Birth (Figs. 559-573)

And let us, seeing this strange birth, estrange ourselves from the earth, and turn our thoughts to heaven; it was for this that the great God appeared on earth as a humble man; for he wanted to draw to the heights those who cry to him "Alleluia."

The words *birth* and *the great God appeared on earth as a humble man* in this stanza prompted the artists to illustrate it with a variant of the Nativity scene.² It is seen in manuscripts, the Synodal and Escorial Akathistos cycles and the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Skopelos icon, which generally follows the iconographical tradition found in the manuscripts (Figs. 559-563). The most complete Nativity scene is painted in the Serbian Psalter, to which a group of five men approaching the cave have been added, representing the believers of this stanza (Fig. 229). Joseph, reclining on a mattress, has curiously substituted the Virgin in the Skopelos icon, where also a half-naked man appears among the believers venerating Christ (Fig. 245).

Other artists, not wishing to repeat the Nativity scene that already decorated stanza 7, used a different iconography for the appearance of God on earth: Christ Emmanuel is depicted on a throne in the middle of the scene; he is venerated by bishops, monks and cantors in St. Nicholas Orphanos in Thessaloniki, and by monks in Dečani (Figs. 264-265). Christ Emmanuel was also used in the illustration of stanza 13, the New Creation, in Dečani (Fig. 556).

A standing Virgin, holding Christ in a rhomboid in front of her chest and venerated by monks in Cozia forms a singular but not ideal iconography for this stanza; the same type of Virgin was already used in the previous stanza and is

¹ *Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

² For the decoration of stanza 14, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 31-32 and 48. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 75-77. Gounaris, 87.

again seen in stanza 17 in this church (Figs. 141 and 143). An enthroned Virgin with the Child venerated by angels in Marko cannot be considered as a successful manner of illustrating this stanza (Figs. 124 and 567). This can also be said for Matejče, where an icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* is venerated by monks on the left and cantors on the right (Fig. 104). This is the first of the four stanzas in this church decorated with a liturgical scene; the other stanzas are: 17, 20 and 24.

A new iconography was finally invented in order to illustrate in the best manner the most important meaning of this stanza: People should turn their thoughts to heaven, because God appeared on earth in order to draw the believers to the heights. This new iconography divides the scene in two parts; Christ is depicted in the upper one and the believers in the lower part of the scene looking in his direction. It is found in Ochrid, Valsamonero, Roustika,¹ the Hodegetria Monastery and the Uspenskij icon, showing Christ and the believers in various forms (Figs. 569-573). The donor of the Hodegetria Monastery, the priest and monk Gregorios is portrayed here kneeling; he chose to be depicted in this stanza, because he wanted to be included among those who Christ would draw to the heights, as mentioned in the last verse of this oikos.

The *Hermeneia* describes this scene as follows: *Sky and on it the Virgin and Child seated on a throne; below the sky is a crowd of hosioi looking up to the sky.*² The closest parallel to this description is seen in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 282 and 573).

Stanza 15 (O), the Double Nature of Christ (Figs. 574-588)

The unbounded Word was complete among men below, and from Heaven above never absent; this was not merely a journey from place to place, but a divine condescension, the birth of a child by a virgin possessed by God; and she heard the words: (chairetismo) follow).

The double nature of Christ, alluded to in this stanza, is mainly rendered by depicting Christ twice:³ once on earth and again in heaven. An adult Christ has been chosen for both places in most of the cycles. He appears in Ochrid, Roustika, Valsamonero, the Hodegetria Monastery, in Dečani, the Tomič Psalter, the Skopelos icon (Figs. 574-580), and in Matejče, where also an imperial couple appears (Fig. 103). In the Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon, the axial

¹ This scene decorates oikos 13 in Ochrid and Valsamonero, and oikos 16 in Roustika, but it should decorate oikos 14, as already noted.

² *Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

³ For the decoration of stanza 15, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 32-33 and 48-49. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 77-82.

arrangement of the two figures of Christ, seen in the other cycles, is broken and no additional figures are depicted. Christ Emmanuel in Marko has substituted the adult Christ on earth and vice-versa in the Serbian Psalter, in which the axial arrangement is again broken (Figs. 125 and 230). Christ Emmanuel appears twice in the church of St. Nicholas Orphanos (Fig. 86). Only one figure of Christ appears standing in a mandorla in Cozia, and sitting on a throne in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, by which the double nature of Christ is not clearly visualised (Figs. 586-588).

Quite exceptional is the decoration of this stanza in the Uspenskij icon, in which God the Father appears in the upper part of the scene (Figs. 276 and 581). Christ Pantokrator is depicted on a throne below him, flanked by the Virgin and St. John the Baptist in a Deësis composition, and by two prophets. Two hovering angels, carrying the symbols of the Passion, flank Christ. Figures in supplication are painted in a cave under the feet of Christ. The presence of the Virgin as intercessor can be better explained by the eleventh chairetismos of this stanza (*hail, key to the kingdom of Christ*). The Deësis composition for this stanza is also seen in the murals of the St. Ferapont Monastery (Figs. 287 and 582).

The *Hermeneia* divides for the third consecutive time the scene into two parts: Christ, surrounded by a circle of eternal light and angels, is depicted above the sky and again below it blessing; the Apostles with a crowd of other people flank him.¹ The closest parallels to this description are found in Roustika and Meronas, where also Apostles appear (Fig. 15), while the division of the scene into two parts is also seen in most of the mural paintings; the saints flanking Christ vary from scene to scene.

Stanza 16 (Π), the Astounded Angels (Figs. 589-603)

All the orders of the angels were astounded at the great act of your incarnation; for they saw, as a man approachable by all, him who was unapproachable as God, living among us and hearing from us all "Alleluia".

This stanza is of course decorated with angels venerating Christ, whom these verses address.² A variant of the Nativity scene has been again chosen in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 207, 232, 246 and 589-591). It also renders the words of the text *incarnation, a man approachable by all and living among us*. The angels surround the Nativity cave

¹ *Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

² For the decoration of stanza 16, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 33-34 and 49. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 82-87.

with the Virgin and the Infant in the Tomič Psalter, to which also the figure of the pensive Joseph has been added in the Serbian Psalter. In the Skopelos icon, only the Infant and the animals are reproduced below the angels.

Another iconographical type illustrating this stanza shows angels surrounding the Virgin enthroned with the Child. It appears in the churches of St. Nicholas Orphanos, Dečani and in the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 69, 87, 316 and 592-594). The Virgin with the Infant is shown standing in Matejče and flanked by angels on one side and seraphs on the other (Figs. 105 and 595). All angels are clad in imperial garments, except in the Hodegetria Monastery.

A third type reveals Christ Emmanuel on a throne surrounded by angels. It is seen in the Cretan churches of Roustika and Meronas, where it decorates by mistake stanza 14 (Figs. 14 and 596-597), and in Valsamonero (Figs. 52 and 598). Christ Emmanuel and the angels in grisaille are placed within a blue circle in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 277 and 599). In Ochrid, an adult Christ substitutes Christ Emmanuel on the throne, if the drawing by Grozdanov is accurate (Fig. 600).

Finally, an adult Christ is shown enthroned in a mandorla carried by angels in Marko and Cozia (Figs. 126, 142 and 601-602). The former was copied from depictions of the Ascension of Christ. In the Synodal and the Escorial manuscripts, Christ is depicted standing in a mandorla with angular extensions, painted under an arch (Figs. 185 and 603). The entire composition is exceptional. These scenes, especially when a mandorla appears, and those which show Christ Emmanuel, especially when also seraphs appear, denoting that a scene is placed in heaven, are inspired by the words of this oikos characterising Christ as *unapproachable as God*.

The *Hermeneia* describes a scene that has not survived among the extant Akathistos cycles: *Christ seated on a throne, blessing; above him is heaven, and all the choirs of the angels in wonder ascending and descending to it*.¹

Stanza 17 (P), the Voiceless Orators (Figs. 604-618)

Before you, mother of God, we see wordy orators as voiceless as fish; they are at a loss as they say: 'How is it that you are still a virgin and yet had the power to give birth?' But let us marvel at the mystery and cry out in faith: (chairetismoi follow).

The 'voiceless orators' flank an enthroned Virgin with the Child in Ochrid, Roustika, Vori, and Valsamonero¹ (Figs. 17, 34, 53, 336 and 604-607). They are

¹ *Hermeneia*, 149; translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

clad in contemporary costumes with *skaranika* hats in various colours. They hold books and in Ochrid and Valsamonero a box (with books). In Elasson they hold unfurled scrolls and flank an enthroned Virgin Dexiokratousa, who also appears in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 70, 247 and 608-609). The men in the icon are clad in 'antique' chiton and himation, which fit better to the ancient philosophers, men of letters and disputers mentioned in the salutations of this oikos, in which even Athenians appear.

The Virgin with the Child is shown enthroned in a mandorla in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 208, 233 and 614-615). She is flanked by men in classical costume in the former Psalter and by kings in the latter. She is portrayed standing and holding the Child in Dečani, Marko and Cozia (Figs. 127, 143, 317 and 616-618). The Child is shown in a star on the chest of the Virgin in Marko and in a rhomboid in Cozia. The orators are clad in contemporary costume in all three churches, the most elaborate ones seen in Marko.

An enthroned Virgin without the Child is painted in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, in the Uspenskij icon and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 163, 186, 278, 288 and 610-613). The men hold scrolls and in the two manuscripts one group wears contemporary and the other ancient costumes. The Uspenskij icon reveals a more interesting iconography by showing the Virgin flanked by men of various standings and nationalities: two bishops, two enthroned kings holding books, a hymn composer in the lower left corner and men in short tunics and white and red 'Jewish' hats. The books and scrolls scattered on the ground denote their inability to explain the mystery mentioned in the text of this stanza. This scene is perhaps the closest one to the description of this stanza in the *Hermeneia*: *The Virgin with the Child seated on a throne and to the right and to the left of her men, young and old, wearing on their heads fur hats or kerchiefs wound, in wonder, and at their feet lie books on the ground, open and closed*.²

Stanza 18 (Σ), the Salvation of the World (Figs. 619-632)

He who set all things in order came to the world in his own will, wishing to save it. As God he was a shepherd, yet for our sake he came among us, a man like ourselves; and, calling like to like, as a God he heard "Alleluia."

The simplest picture decorating this stanza exhibits Christ while blessing among various groups of men.³ This scene may be interpreted as illustrating the words

¹ For the decoration of stanza 17, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 34-35 and 49-50. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 87-89. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 152-154.

² *Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

³ For the decoration of stanza 18, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 35-36 and 51. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 90-94. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 154-156.

of this stanza stating that Christ *came among us*, in order to save the world. In Elasson, Christ Emmanuel is represented enthroned and blessing with both hands; two groups of beardless men flank him (Figs. 76 and 620). In Cozia, a standing Christ blesses with both hands (Figs. 143 and 622). He is flanked by two groups of men including kings; one of them is clad in contemporary imperial costume. The figure of Christ Pantokrator flanked by two groups of believers also decorates this stanza in the church of the Apostles in Kalamata.¹ In an asymmetrical composition in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, Christ blesses in the direction of a group of men (Figs. 164, 187, 619 and 621). The scene is placed in front of an architectonic background.

The Tomič and the Serbian Psalters show a deviating iconography (Figs. 209, 231 and 623-624). Similar figures are displayed in a different arrangement: Christ is shown enthroned in a mandorla in the middle of the scene; angels emerge behind a hill at the upper part of the scene. At the lower part, the Virgin and several men in supplication are represented, along with the personification of Cosmos as seen in Pentecost scenes. The artists, in their endeavour to illustrate the text as literally as possible, painted Christ *as God* in a mandorla flanked by angels, and depicted the Virgin and the men to show that Christ came *among us* in order to save the world, the latter represented by the personification of Cosmos.

A singular iconography illustrates this oikos in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 248 and 645). It shows Christ Anapeson (Genesis, 49:9) on the right, the Virgin sitting on the left and the personification of Cosmos, clad in red, in a cave in the lower part of the scene.² Christ Anapeson³ symbolises here God who came for our sake to the world, the Cosmos figure in the scene.

The wish of God to save the world, mentioned in the first part of the text of this stanza, is visualised in several cycles with variants of the Descent of Christ into Hell, the Anastasis.⁴ In Dečani, Christ is depicted standing in a mandorla which is placed in a cave; he holds a large cross with his right hand and a scroll with his left, resembling Christ from the Anastasis scene; two groups of men flank him in an attitude of supplication (Figs. 318 and 626). In Marko a full

¹ Kalokyris, *Messenia*, 39, pl.13b. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 93-94.

² Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 93, with Post-byzantine examples of this type of decoration for oikos 18.

³ On Christ Anapeson see: Pallas, D.I., *Passion und Bestattung Christi in Byzanz. Der Ritus - Das Bild* (Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia, 2), München, 1965, 184-196. Wessel, K., in *RbK*, I, 1011-1012. Lucchesi-Palli, E., in *LCI*, 1, 396-398, s.v. *Christus - Anapeson*.

⁴ For the iconography of the Anastasis, see Weitzmann, *Evangelion*, 83-98, reprinted in *idem*, *Psalters and Gospels*, essay no. XI. Xyngopoulos, Kathodos, 113 ff. Weitzmann, *Aristocratic*, 98-102, reprinted in *idem*, *Psalters and Gospels*, essay no. VI. Lucchesi Palli, E., in *RbK*, I, 142-148, s.v. *Anastasis*. *Eadem*, in *LCI*, 2, 322-331, s.v. *Höllenfahrt Christi*. Lange, *Auferstehung*. Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, III, 41-66. Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, 125-126. Schwartz, *Anastasis*, 29-34. Kartsonis, *Anastasis*. Plank, Adam, 34-49.

Anastasis scene decorates this stanza (Figs. 128 and 627). Remnants of the lower part of the scene decorating this stanza in Matejče also suggest an Anastasis scene (Fig. 106).

A variant of the Anastasis also illustrates this stanza in Ochrid, Roustika, Meronas, Valsamonero and Vori¹ (Figs. 18, 54, 128 and 628-630). Christ turns his head in the direction of a group of angels instead of Adam. A possible explanation of this is that he wants to deliver Adam (and the righteous who have been saved) to the angels in order to be led into Paradise. In the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus (or Acts of Pilate, II), describing the Descent of Christ into Hell, we read in chapter IX (XXV) that Christ delivered Adam and all the righteous to the Archangel Michael in Paradise.

The Uspenskij icon, followed by St. Ferapont, reveals as usual a different iconography. The wish of God to save the world, mentioned in the hymn, is interpreted with the Passion of Christ, from which Christ Helkomenos has been chosen. He is tied with a white rope around his neck and pulled by a soldier to the cross² (Figs. 284 and 631). The soldier points towards the upper part of the cross, as does one of the three horsemen depicted on the other side of the cross. The Helkomenos scene in St. Ferapont is slightly different (Figs. 288 and 632).

The *Hermeneia* describes the decoration of oikos 18 on the basis of a scene that has not been preserved: *The heaven with sun and moon and stars; two angels come down from it. Below are mountains adorned and made beautiful with trees and flowers, and with houses among them; Christ is walking there, followed by his apostles talking to each other in wonder.*³ The closest parallel to this description is found in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts; Christ is not, however, followed by Apostles, but addresses a group of men; no angels, trees or flowers can be seen (Figs. 164 and 187).

Stanza 19 (T), the Defence of Virgins (Figs. 633-644)

Virgin, mother of God, you are the defence of virgins, and of all those who run to you for protection. For the Creator of heaven and earth created you, immaculate

¹ The scene in Ochrid is partially and in Meronas and Vori badly preserved.

² On the iconography of the Helkomenos see: Millet, *Recherches*, 362-379, figs. 382-407 (*Le Chemin de Croix*). Cottas, Venetia, *L'influence du drame "Christos Paschon" sur l'art chrétien d'Orient*, Paris, 1931, 38-42, *passim*. Bees, Helkomenos. Cottas, Helkomenos. Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, II, 88-93, figs. 281-296. Boskovits, M., - Red., in *LCI*, 2, 601-602, s.v. *Kreuzaufrichtung*. Laag, H., Jászai, G., in *LCI*, 2, 649-653, s.v. *Kreuztragung Jesu*. Wilk, B., *Der Darstellung der Kreuztragung Christi und verwandter Szenen bis um 1300*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Tübingen, 1969, with several Byzantine examples.

³ *Hermeneia*, 149; translated by Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

lady, dwell in your womb, and taught all men to address you: (chairetismoï follow).

The decoration of this stanza can be best classified on the grounds of the people flanking the Virgin, who is chiefly represented without the Child.¹ Most of the cycles naturally show virgins but men also appear occasionally. The virgins are of various kinds. The Synodal and Escorial manuscripts reveal maidens flanking an enthroned Virgin (Figs. 165, 188, 633 and 635). A few of them have short sleeves and peploi over the head, resembling classical figures. Maidens in a similar non-religious costume surround an enthroned Virgin on a pedestal in Elasson and a standing Virgin on a pedestal in Cozia (Figs. 77, 144, 634 and 636). They also have short sleeves in the partially preserved fresco in Dečani; they flank a standing Virgin, who this time holds the Child (Figs. 319 and 637).

Female saints, among whom queens, St. Catherine and St. Irene, surround a standing Virgin with the Child in Marko and in the lost Belgrade Psalter, which supposedly copies the lost picture of the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 129, 338, 638 and 639). Nuns in the foreground and female saints behind them flank the Virgin in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 283 and 640); the Virgin is depicted standing on a narrow pedestal in an exceptional iconography: she has her maphorion spread like that worn by a Schutzmantel Madonna² in order to protect the nuns, and holds her red girdle above them.

Men have been also added to the scene; they belong to *all those who run to you for protection*, mentioned in the text of this stanza, and to the men whom Christ taught to address the Virgin with the words of the chairetismoï of this stanza. They are mainly monks in the Tomič Psalter, standing to the left of the Virgin orant; nuns stand on the other side, followed by St. Mary of Egypt (Figs. 210 and 641). Nuns and monks also surround a standing Virgin in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 249 and 642). The wall in the background is probably an allusion to the city wall in the Greek text of this stanza (τείχος), to which the Virgin is compared, translated here as *defence*. Female saints, among whom again queens, on one side, and bishops on the other side flank a standing Virgin with the Child only in the Cretan churches in Roustika and Valsamonero (Figs. 19, 55, 643 and 644).

The *Hermeneia* describes the decoration of this oikos as follows: *Houses; the Virgin stands in the middle bearing the Lord as infant in her arms; a crowd of virgins surrounds her.*³ The text does not further specify the virgins.

¹ For the decoration of stanza 19, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 36-37 and 52. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 94-95. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 156-158.

² For this type of Virgin, also known as Mater misericordiae, see Belting-Ihm, C., "Sub matris tutela." *Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte der Schutzmantelmadonna*, Heidelberg, 1976.

³ *Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

Stanza 20 (Y), the Defeated Hymns (Figs. 645-657)

All hymns are defeated that attempt to equal the wealth of your great compassion; for were we to offer you, holy king, as many odes as there are grains of sand, we would accomplish nothing worthy of what you have given to us, as we sing "Alleluia".

Christ and not the Virgin is the central figure in most of the cycles, because this stanza is addressed to him.¹ The various groups of people accompanying him represent those who declare that their odes cannot be compared to what Christ has offered to mankind, and sing *Alleluia*. An enthroned Christ in a mandorla held by angels covers the upper part of the scene in Roustika (Figs. 20 and 645). Bishops and priests venerate him in the lower part of the picture. In Valsamonero and the badly preserved scene in Meronas, the mandorla with Christ and the angels is positioned on one side of the scene and the clergy, lead by St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus, on the other side (Figs. 56 and 646). In Marko, Christ is shown enthroned in front of an exedra and flanked by angels and bishops (Figs. 130 and 647). A similar but less elaborate scene is seen in the Belgrade Psalter, which supposedly copies the lost picture of the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 339 and 648). One finds saints to the right of the enthroned Christ in Ochrid, but the other side of this scene is not preserved (Fig. 655).

Cantors have been added to on one side of a standing Christ in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, whereas the other side reveals bishops and monks (Figs. 168, 189, 649 and 651). The appearance of cantors can be fully justified by the *hymns* and *odes* of the text of this stanza, which actually is the most important part of it. They are also found kneeling below an icon of Christ and flanked by monks and nuns in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 250 and 650). This substitution of the figure of Christ by an icon is unique among the Akathistos cycles. The half-figure of Christ in the upper part of the scene, but in a segment in gradations of blue, i.e. in heaven, is also seen in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 211 and 652). He is venerated by four groups, among which monks and nuns; the men wearing on their head a *skaranikon* may be state dignitaries rather than clerics or cantors.

The picture decorating this stanza in the Uspenskij icon again displays a distinct iconography with details which cannot be fully explained by the text (Figs. 285 and 653). Christ is shown standing on a pedestal in front of a light green tower-like building behind a hill and venerated by bishops. In the foreground a well or basin is depicted and around it figures in ecstatic poses; a river flows in the lower part of the scene. The figures on the foreground and the

¹ For the decoration of stanza 20, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 37-38 and 52-53. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 96-99.

'riverbanks' may be identified as the believers offering *as many odes as grains of sand*, mentioned in the text of this stanza. The basin in the middle and the river in the foreground may be explained by the salutations 6-10 of the next stanza (21): *hail to you who make the river of many streams to gush forth; hail to you who depict the pattern of the font; hail, basin that washes clean the conscience; hail, bowl that mixes together delights*. This scene is simplified in the St. Ferapont Monastery (Figs. 289 and 652). Two Russian bishops venerate the standing figure of Christ; a hexagonal well is depicted below his feet, flanked by two men, a boy and a woman.

Less successful is the decoration of this stanza when the figure of the Virgin appears in it, who is not mentioned at all in this stanza.¹ She is shown standing, without Christ, on a low pedestal in Cozia (Figs. 144 and 656). Two groups of men in contemporary costumes, among whom cantors, flank her. The Virgin is substituted by the icon of the *Hodegetria* in Dečani and in Matejče (Figs. 88, 107 and 657). The icon is placed on a stand and venerated by bishops and cantors. Here, and possibly in the Skopelos icon, we see a scene inspired by the liturgy.

The *Hermeneia* describes the decoration of this stanza as follows: *Sky; Christ is seated on a throne on it, blessing; he is surrounded by a crowd of angels, and below him are bishops and hosioi holding open books*.² The closest parallel to the *Hermeneia* is found in Roustika, where Christ is depicted in the upper half of the scene, sitting in a mandorla and surrounded by angels; bishops are depicted below him, but they do not hold open books (Figs. 20 and 645).

Stanza 21 (Φ), the Shining Lamp (Figs. 658-672)

We see the holy virgin as a lamp full of light, shining to those in darkness; for by lighting the incorporeal flame she leads everyone towards divine understanding, illuminating the mind with brilliance, and honoured by this cry: (chaitismoi follow).

This stanza is embellished in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts with the Virgin in a blue mandorla showing a lighted candle to a group of men³ (Figs. 169, 190, 658 and 660). The red edges of the mandorla render her likeness to a lamp full of light; she lights with her gesture, according to the second part of the text, *the incorporeal flame*, i.e. Christ, and leads everyone to it.

The next stage of the evolution of the decoration of this stanza, reveals the Virgin holding or embracing a lighted candle, by which she is better identified

¹ This stanza is not followed by salutations.

² *Hermeneia*, 149-150; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

³ For the decoration of stanza 21, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 38-39 and 53. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 100-104. Constantinides, *Ellasson*, 158-161.

with a lamp than in the previous scenes. In Cozia she stands alone with the candle (Figs. 145 and 169). She is, however, accompanied by more figures in almost all other cycles. In the Uspenskij icon and in St. Ferapont, she holds the candle and stands on a pedestal (Figs. 281, 290, 663 and 661). She shines to those in darkness, shown in supplication in a cave, with which the beginning of this stanza is visualised. Two men, one of whom holds a scroll, flank the Virgin above the cave, who do not appear in other cycles.

The Virgin shines to those in darkness in an asymmetrical composition in the Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 212, 251, 662 and 664). She oddly turns her head in the opposite direction, by which a common archetype for both cycles may be suggested. The Skopelos icon reveals a unique detail: the identification of the *incorporeal flame* with Christ is visualised by the half figure of Christ Emmanuel delineated in white on the red flame.

The Virgin as orant on a pedestal appears in Ellasson, flanked by virgins in a cave in the upper part of the scene (Figs. 71 and 665). She has a similar attitude in Matejče, flanked by men in a cave, most probably Apostles (Figs. 108 and 666). An extension above her head suggests a candle, which is better identifiable as such through its red colour in Marko (Figs. 131 and 668). She holds Christ here and is flanked by Apostles in the cave. A similar figure of the Virgin with the Child and the candle above her head is seen in Dečani (Figs. 320 and 667). She is moreover flanked by two angels in Valsamonero, a detail that appears only here (Figs. 57 and 669).

The Virgin with the Child is painted again in an asymmetrical composition in Ochrid, looking in the direction of the Apostles sitting in the cave (Fig. 670). A similar arrangement of the figures is seen in Roustika (Figs. 21 and 671). The Virgin is shown in a mandorla with triple beams extended from it, all painted in red, with which the incorporeal flame is emphasised.

Quite exceptional is the iconography of this stanza in the Belgrade Psalter, which supposedly copies the lost picture of the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 340 and 672). The Virgin with the Child are shown sitting in a large lamp, positioned in a cave.

The *Hermeneia* describes the illustration of this stanza as follows: *The Virgin in a cloud, holding the Lord as an infant in her arms; a great light surrounds her and rays descend to the ground; below is a dark cave with kneeling men in it, looking at her*.¹ The position of the Virgin high in a cloud is not found in any of the pictures examined here, while the men in a dark cave are a regular feature.

¹ *Hermeneia*, 150; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

Stanza 22 (X), the Cancellation of the Old Debts (Figs. 673-686)

The Redeemer of all mankind wished to cancel our old debts, and came himself to live with the fugitives from his grace; and having torn up the parchment (cheirographon) he hears from them all "Alleluia."

The Synodal and Escorial manuscripts reveal Christ, with outstretched right hand and holding a tiny furled scroll in his left one, hastening in the direction of a group of men¹ (Figs. 166, 191, 673 and 575). A wall is depicted in the background with a closed door in the middle.² The tearing up of the parchment, referred to in this stanza and appearing in other cycles, is not shown in this scene; one may, therefore, assume that this picture is inspired on the words of this oikos mentioning that Christ *came himself to live with the fugitives from his grace*.

The next stage of the evolution of the decoration of this stanza reveals a new iconography for the figure of Christ. He is shown tearing up a scroll, the *cheirographon* of the text, cancelling thus the old debts of mankind. The *cheirographon* in the text of this oikos has been associated with that mentioned in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians,³ as well as with liturgical and hymnological texts, among which those by Romanos the Melodos.⁴ St. John Chrysostom identified the *cheirographon* referred to by St. Paul as, among other things, the *cheirographon* that God drew up with Adam: *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die* (Genesis, 2:17); this *cheirographon* was in the possession of the devil.⁵ The widely spread legend, that the *cheirographon* was held by Satan, played an important role for the next stage of the iconography of this oikos, as we shall see below.

Christ, depicted in a frontal attitude and tearing up a scroll, decorates this stanza in the partially preserved scene in Dečani⁶ and in Cozia (Figs. 145 and 674). In the badly preserved scene in Matejče, Christ tears a scroll while walking away from a group of men, a posture that does not make much sense (Figs. 109 and 676). A more elaborate scene is seen in Marko: Christ tearing a scroll stands on a low pedestal in front of an aedicula; Apostles and Old Testament

¹ For the decoration of stanza 22, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 39-40 and 53-54. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 104-108.

² Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 107, considered the possibility that the doors might represent the gates of Hades.

³ 2:14: *Blotting out the handwriting (cheirographon) of ordinance that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.*

⁴ Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 104-105, with the relevant passages. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 53.

⁵ St. John Chrysostom, *In epistolam ad Colossenses*, PG, 62, 340-341.

⁶ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 39-40, figs. 48a-b.

personages flank him (Figs. 132 and 677). A similar but less elaborate scene is seen in the Belgrade Psalter, which supposedly copies the lost picture of the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 341 and 678).

The next stage of evolution of the iconography of this stanza includes Adam and Eve among the figures flanking Christ, which are depicted kneeling instead of standing. They certainly appear in Valsamonero and possibly in Meronas and Ochrid (Figs. 58, 335, 679-680 and 682). The connection of the *old debts* with Adam, which the Redeemer wished to cancel, is in this manner clearly visualised. In Roustika only men flank Christ, the first on the left having the features of St. Peter (Figs. 22 and 681).

Another iconographic type for this stanza displays variants of the Anastasis scene. It is found in the Skopelos icon, the Tomič Psalter and the Uspenskij icon. The Skopelos icon shows Christ holding the cross of the Anastasis in his hand and approaching the cave of Hades (Figs. 251 and 684). Adam and Eve are depicted in the cave, together with the righteous behind them. This scene does not illustrate the tearing of the *cheirographon*, mentioned in the text, but the result of its tearing: the cancellation of the ancient debts and the salvation of mankind, as mentioned in the first verse of this stanza, which is accomplished through the descent of Christ in the Underworld.

In the Tomič Psalter, Christ is depicted in the mandorla of the Anastasis holding a cross (Figs. 213 and 683). An angel fastens Satan in a cave, painted on the other side of the scene. This iconographic detail is copied from the Anastasis scenes which is inspired by chapter VI (XXII), 2 of the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus (or Acts of Pilate, II), describing the Descent into Hell: Christ took hold upon the head of Satan and delivered him unto the angels to bind him with irons.¹ The scene in the Tomič Psalter illustrates thus the cancellation of the old debts by the capture of Satan; he was, according to the legend mentioned above, in the possession of the *cheirographon*, which Christ tore up. The *cheirographon* is, however, not depicted.

The allusion to this legend is even better illustrated in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 286 and 686): Christ descends in the Underworld and pulls Adam out of the cave. His attention is, however, directed not to Adam, but to a winged devil in chains, depicted on the left, from whom he seizes the *cheirographon*, in order to cancel the old debts of mankind. An almost identical iconography is seen in St. Ferapont (Figs. 292 and 685).

The *Hermeneia* describes the illustration for this stanza as follows: *Houses; Christ stands among them, tearing with his hands a scroll written in Hebrew; at the bottom of the scroll is written: The cheirographon of Adam.*² The scene corresponds to that belonging to the iconographic type seen in Dečani and Cozia

¹ James, *Apocryphal N.T.*, 136.

² *Hermeneia*, 150; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

(Figs. 145 and 674); Christ is here represented alone, without other figures, which are also omitted in the description of the *Hermeneia*. One may observe that the *Hermeneia* correctly identified the *cheirographon* of the text of this stanza as that of Adam.

Stanza 23 (Ψ), Singing Your Giving Birth (Figs. 687-700)

We sing your giving birth, and we all celebrate you as a living temple, Mother of God; for the Lord, who holds all in his hand, dwelt in your womb and made you holy, made you glorious, and taught us all to cry out to you: (chairetismoï follow).

The artists, inspired by the first words of this stanza, illustrated it in most of the cycles with cantors flanking the Virgin.¹ In Dečani and the Skopelos icon, they flank the enthroned Virgin with the Child; the latter reflects the words of this stanza devoted to Christ (Figs. 252 and 687-688). Bishops have been added to the cantors in most of the cycles, e.g., in Ochrid, Roustika, Valsamonero, Vori, Meronas and the Belgrade Psalter, which supposedly copies the lost picture of the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 23, 35, 59, 337, 342 and 689-694). The clergymen are inspired by the sixth *chairetismos* of this oikos, in which the Virgin is saluted as *holy exaltation of dutiful priests*.

An asymmetrical arrangement of the figures is displayed in the Tomič Psalter and in Matejče. In the Tomič Psalter, the cantors approach the enthroned Virgin with the Child from the right, wearing *skiadia* and *skaranika* (Figs. 214 and 695). In Matejče, the Virgin with the child is portrayed standing (Figs. 110 and 696). An angel in imperial garments stands behind her, which is a unique iconographic detail for this stanza. Two bishops and cantors in white robes and *skaranika* laud her.

Not the figure of the Virgin, but her icon is venerated in several cycles, transforming the scene to a liturgical representation.² It is seen in Marko, Cozia and, as the remnants of this stanza suggest, in Elasson³ (Fig. 78). In Marko, the icon of the Virgin *Eleousa* is carried in procession in the presence of a ruler, Byzantine or Serbian, most probably during the Akathistos service (Figs. 133 and 698). He is followed by monks, nuns and behind them bishops; two of the

¹ For the decoration of stanza 23, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 40-42 and 54. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 108-113. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 162-164.

² See, among others, Grabar, A., "L'Hodegtria et l'Eléousa," *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti, Novi Sad*, 10 (1974), 1-14. Patterson Ševčenko, N., "Icons in the Liturgy," *DOP*, 45 (1991), 48 ff., figs. 9-15. The various theories on the identification of the ceremony are summarised by Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 71-75. See also Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 110-113.

³ Constantinides, *Elasson*, 162, pls. 86c and 92c in colour. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 40, fig. 28. Moran, *Singers*, 105, *passim*, pl. VI.

monks are fully visible, clad in luxurious *phelonia*.¹ In Cozia the icon is placed on a stand, the *podea* of which is embroidered with the figure of an emperor in a standing attitude of praying. An emperor and his dignitaries wearing *skaranika* venerate the icon on the left and monks and cantors on the right (Figs. 146 and 697). The presence of the emperors in Cozia, Marko and Vori may be explained by the fifth *chairetismos*, in which the Virgin is called *precious diadem of reverent kings*.

A Russian church with the icon of the Virgin *Dexiokratousa* decorating the upper part of its façade is seen in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 283 and 699). Three bishops on the right and a royal couple on the left praise the Virgin. This is the only picture that visualises the characterisation of the Virgin as a temple, mentioned in the text of this stanza. A similar composition is found for this stanza in the St. Ferapont Monastery (Figs. 293 and 700).

The *Hermeneia* describes the decoration of this stanza as follows: *Houses; the Virgin is seated on a throne holding the infant Lord in her arms. Before her are [groups of] bishops and priests, one of which holds the Gospels and the other a censer. Behind them are musicians singing, some of whom have wide-brimmed hats, others tall white hats; deacons are in the midst of them with open scrolls, leading and singing.*² This description corresponds to most of the pictures that have been preserved.

Stanza 24 (Ω), the Offering of the Hymn (Figs. 701-715)

O mother hymned by all, Mother who bore the Word, most holy of all saints: accept this present offering and deliver us from every evil, and from the punishment that is to come free those who cry together "Alleluia."

In the last stanza, the believers offer the Akathistos hymn to the Virgin for the salvation of their soul.³ The hymn is visualised in Roustika and the badly preserved scene in Meronas with scrolls held by angels and presented to the enthroned Virgin holding the Child⁴ (Figs. 24 and 701).

¹ The bishops are depicted around the corner behind the monks and are not visible in my reproductions but in Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 40-41 and 71, figs. 111-113 and 71 ff.

² *Hermeneia*, 150; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

³ For the decoration of stanza 24, see Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 42-43 and 55. Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 113-116. Constantinides, *Elasson*, 164-168.

⁴ This iconography for stanza 24 also appears in the Post-byzantine Akathistos manuscript Garrett 13 in Princeton: Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 35, 113-116, figs. 25 in colour, and 59. She explained the appearance of the angels by the *Theotokion* sung in the liturgy of the Akathistos and by other Mariological texts (pp. 115 and 139).

In most of the cycles the hymn is however understood as a chant and rendered with various people 'singing' it. They flank an orant Virgin in Ochrid, Valsamonero and Vori. The preserved part of the scene in Ochrid displays two candle carriers, the *lampadarii*, flanking a standing Virgin in prayer in front of a large drapery, and cantors with *skaranika* hats on the left (Figs. 337 and 702). This scene can be better observed in Valsamonero and Vori, where bishops and emperors are also visible (Figs. 36, 60 and 703-704). The Virgin with the Child in front of her chest in Cozia is shown standing in a mandorla, which often appears in this church, and flanked by monks and cantors with *skiadia* hats¹ (Figs. 147 and 705).

Several cycles exhibit the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* lauded by various groups of people. Cantors flank the icon of the Virgin, which is affixed on a high stand in the Synodal Akathistos and on a lower one in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 167, 215 and 706-707). The Skopelos icon reveals an asymmetrical composition with monks in the foreground and men carrying *hexapteryga* standards behind them (Figs. 252 and 708). In Marko one finds again a copiously decorated scene showing the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* on a stand with a richly embroidered *podea* (Figs. 134 and 709). Bishops and deacons on one side and cantors on the other one flank the icon, which is supported by a beardless figure; two novices, one holding a candle and the other singing from a book, are painted at the feet of the cantors. A similar but less elaborate scene decorates this stanza in Matejče (Figs. 111 and 710). The fragmentarily preserved scene in Ellasson has been also reconstructed as including an icon on a stand² (Fig. 78). A partially visible figure in white garments is shown standing next to the icon. Virgins take by exception a prominent place in the group of people on the left of the scene. In Dečani, Tsar Stephen Dušan (1331-1355), his wife Helena and his son Stephen Uroš are portrayed to the right of the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* (Figs. 321 and 711). This is a unique appearance of a ruling imperial family in an Akathistos cycle.

In the Serbian Psalter, the icon of the Virgin *Dexiokratousa* is possibly carried, not only supported, by two beardless men and flanked by clerics and cantors (Figs. 234 and 712). A procession is definitely depicted in the Uspenskij icon, because the scene takes place in a street (Figs. 278 and 713). It is, however, the picture decorating the Prooemium in the icon which fits better stanza 24 (Figs. 276 and 714). One also finds an imperial couple here, occasionally seen in other cycles and in the St. Ferapont Monastery (Figs. 294 and 715).

The *Hermeneia* describes the decoration of stanza 24 as follows: *The Virgin seated on a high throne; beneath it is a footstool with three steps and in front of it*

*kings, priests, bishops and hosioi pray, some kneeling, others standing, and hold scrolls and saying "Alleluia".*¹ This description does not mention an icon and is, therefore, closer to the depictions seen in Ochrid, Valsamonero and Vori.

¹ Babić, *Acatiste*, 179, fig. 4, identified the group on the left as noble laymen.

² Constantinides, *Ellasson*, 164-167, pl. 86c in colour. Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 42, figs. 29a-b.

¹ *Hermeneia*, 150; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarises the distinct iconographic features of every cycle, ranging from small details to whole scenes, and concludes on the contribution of certain cycles to the better knowledge of the iconography of the Akathistos. It ends with an attempt to reconstruct the prototype of the illustrated Akathistos.

The cycles in the Panagia churches in Roustika, dated 1390-1391 A.D., and in Meronas, ca. 1400 A.D., may be mentioned here together, because the stanzas preserved in Meronas reveal a similar iconography to that in Roustika.

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, belongs to the iconographic type that also appears outside Crete. It shows an enthroned Virgin in front of a large veil, held by two maidens in Meronas and two groups of maidens in Roustika (Figs. 4, 28 and 417-418).

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated in Roustika with a variant of the Nativity scene, in which more emphasis is given to the nurse holding the Infant than to the shepherds or the angels (Figs. 7 and 459).

Oikos 8, the Journey of the Magi, reveals in both churches a rare iconographic detail: the half-figure of a flying angel shows the way to the Magi (Figs. 8, 29 and 472-473). The artists of Dečani, Marko and the Serbian Psalter went, as already observed, a step further in depicting an archangel with spread wings on horseback leading the way (Figs. 91, 118 and 223).

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, shows in Roustika the Magi on horseback approaching the fortified city of Babylon (Figs. 10 and 503). A distinct iconographic feature is the depiction of the personification of the city of Babylon, clad in eastern garments and having one breast uncovered.

Oikos 11, the Flight into Egypt, displays in Roustika a similar personification standing at the gates of Egypt to that seen in the previous oikos (Figs. 11 and 515). Joseph with Christ on his shoulders follows the Virgin, whereas in Meronas he leads the procession.

Oikos 16 has been by mistake interchanged in both churches with oikos 14, the Strange Birth; it is better preserved in Roustika (Figs. 16 and 571). It is divided into two parts, like in the other Cretan churches and in Ochrid (Figs. 569-572); the closest parallel is found in the Hodegetria Monastery (Fig. 56). The bust of Christ is painted within an octagonal star in the upper part of the scene, and is venerated by bishops and monks, who are depicted in the lower part of the scene.

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, is visualised in both churches with a variant of the Descent of Christ into Hell, the Anastasis (Figs. 18 and 630). In the better preserved scene in Roustika, Christ is portrayed pulling Adam out his sarcophagus and turning his head to a group of angels. The posture of Christ can be explained by his wish to deliver Adam and all the righteous to the archangel Michael in Paradise, as narrated in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus.¹ A similar iconography for this stanza is seen in the partially preserved scenes in Meronas, Vori and Ochrid, and in the better one in Valsamonero (Figs. 54 and 628-630).

Oikos 19, the Defence of Virgins, displays not only female saints, but also bishops flanking the Virgin (Figs. 19, and 643). A similar iconography appears in Valsamonero (Figs. 55 and 644), whereas in the Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon, nuns and monks flank the Virgin (Figs. 210, 249 and 641-642).

Oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, is illustrated in Roustika with a unique composition (Figs. 20 and 645). An enthroned Christ is depicted in a mandorla held by angels in the upper half of the scene. Two groups of bishops venerating him in the lower part of the scene represent those who declare that their odes cannot be compared to what Christ has offered to mankind and sing *Alleluia*. A similar iconography, but in an asymmetrical composition, is seen in the badly preserved scene in Meronas and in the better visible one in Valsamonero (Fig. 56 and 646).

In oikos 21, the Shining Lamp, the Virgin with the Child is uniquely painted within a fiery mandorla, which suggests the incorporeal light shed to those in darkness, mentioned in the text of this oikos (Figs. 21 and 671). Among the people shown in the dark cave on the right, Adam and Eve can be distinguished. A similar but not identical depiction for this oikos is found in Ochrid (Fig. 670).

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, belongs in both churches to the iconographic type that shows a symmetrical composition (Figs. 22 and 681-682). Christ is portrayed standing in the middle and tearing in two pieces a scroll, the *cheirographon* with the original sin. Two groups of men kneel at his feet. The decoration of this oikos in Ochrid and Valsamonero belongs to the same iconographic type (Figs. 58 and 679-680).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, shows in both churches the enthroned Virgin with the Child flanked by bishops and cantors (Figs. 23, 690 and 693). The Virgin in Roustika holds the hand of the first cantor, which is a unique detail among the Akathistos cycles. An almost identical iconography for this stanza is seen in Valsamonero, Vori and Ochrid (Figs. 689 and 691-692).

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is decorated in both churches with a unique iconography (Figs. 24 and 701). Angels, instead of people, offer to the

¹ Gospel of Nicodemus. (or Acts of Pilate, II), chapter IX (XXV), the Descent of Christ into Hell.

Virgin the Akathistos text on scrolls. In most of the cycles the hymn is understood as a chant and rendered by various people 'singing' it.

The complete Akathistos cycle in Valsamonero will be reviewed here together with the fragmentarily preserved cycles in the Hodegetria Monastery, Kavousi and Vori.

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, follows the iconography especially invented for this oikos and shows two maidens holding the veil behind the sitting Virgin in Kavousi, substituted by two angels in Valsamonero (Figs. 32, 40 and 414-415). The appearance of angels in this oikos is exceptional and is seen again only in Ochrid, if we are to judge from the halos of the two figures holding the veil (Fig. 413).

Oikos 5, the Visitation, shows in Valsamonero two female servants witnessing the earthly recognition of the Immaculate Conception by Elisabeth (Figs. 41 and 422). One servant is occasionally seen in other cycles and two ones again in Matejče (Figs. 94 and 423).

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene, reveals a very similar arrangement of the figures in Valsamonero, Kavousi and the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 33, 43 and 462-464). The shepherds are given an important place, approaching the cave with the Virgin sitting next to the manger with the Infant.

Oikos 9, the Adoration of the Magi, is painted with a unique iconography in Valsamonero and in the badly preserved picture of the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 45, 62 and 496). The scene takes place in front of a rocky landscape. The Magi are depicted on horseback, except for the first one; he is shown standing in front of the Virgin with the Child without his crown, as a sign of respect. The Virgin holds the gift already received from him in her left hand.

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, reveals a unique iconographic feature in Valsamonero and in the badly preserved scene of the Hodegetria Monastery (Figs. 46, 63 and 501). The personification of Babylon is portrayed as a queen at the gate of the city, receiving the Magi approaching on horseback. It is obviously copied from the scene showing the Flight into Egypt. The angel seen in Valsamonero also appears flying in Cozia, but no city is depicted there (Figs. 139 and 494).

Oikos 11, the Flight into Egypt, showing James leading the family and the Virgin holding Christ, is enriched with the figure of a second son of Joseph, who turns his head in the direction of his father (Fig. 47 and 523).

Oikos 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, reveals in Valsamonero an interesting composition by depicting the Virgin turning her head backwards and showing to Joseph Christ in the hands of Simeon; the Prophetess Anna stands behind Joseph instead of behind Simeon (Figs. 48 and 534).

The pictures decorating oikoi 13 and 14 in Valsamonero have been interchanged. Oikos 14, which should be oikos 13, the New Creation, is illustrated with an enthroned Virgin with the Child venerated by two groups of monks, just as is oikos 13 in Roustika (Figs. 13, 50 and 548-549). Oikos 13 in the Hodegetria Monastery is embellished with a scene that habitually decorates oikos 4 in other cycles (Figs. 64-65, 419 and 555). It shows the Virgin *Cheirophilousa* on a throne and behind her a veil held by angels.

Oikos 13, which should be oikos 14, the Strange Birth, shows in the upper part a Deësis composition and in the lower bishops, Apostles, a cantor, an emperor and monks (Figs. 49 and 570). The corresponding picture in Ochrid is almost identical in the lower part but a little different in the upper part, revealing only a half figure of Christ and not a Deësis (Figs. 332 and 569). This is the first stanza of the Akathistos to include an emperor.

Oikos 14 in the Hodegetria Monastery is also divided in an upper and a lower part, but it is closer to Roustika than to Valsamonero (Figs. 66-67 and 570-572). Among the monks venerating Christ in an octagonal star, the priest and monk Gregorios is portrayed kneeling. He chose to be depicted in this oikos, because he wanted to be included among those who Christ would *draw to the heights*, as mentioned in the last verse of this oikos. This is the second portrait that can be identified with certainty as such among all Akathistos cycles; the other one appears in stanza 24 in Dečani and shows Tsar Stephen Dušan and his family (Fig. 321).

In oikos 16, the Astounded Angels, the angels in Valsamonero surround Christ Emmanuel, instead of an adult Christ or the Virgin with the Child seen in other cycles (Figs. 52 and 598). This is a characteristic of this and two more Cretan churches, those in Roustika and Meronas, where it decorates by mistake stanza 14 (Figs. 596-597).

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, displays in Valsamonero a variant of the Anastasis, which also appears in the other Cretan cycles and in Ochrid (Figs. 18, 54 and 628-630).

Oikos 19, the Defence of Virgins, shows in Valsamonero, as in Roustika, not only female saints, but also bishops flanking the Virgin (Figs. 55, 19, and 643-644).

Oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, is painted in Valsamonero with an asymmetrical composition, whereas in Rethymnon a symmetrical one is seen (Figs. 20, 56 and 645-646). Christ is shown enthroned in a mandorla surrounded by three angels on the left of the scene. The bishops on the right represent those who declare that their odes cannot be compared to what Christ has offered to mankind and sing *Alleluia*.

Oikos 21, the Shining Lamp, shows in Valsamonero the Virgin with the Child standing and flanked by two angels and two groups of believers kneeling, who represent those in darkness illuminated by the incorporeal light (Figs. 57 and

669). This symmetrical composition is different from the asymmetrical one painted in the Cretan churches of Roustika and Meronas (Figs. 21 and 671). However, it is also found in a similar but not identical iconography outside Crete, in Elasson, Matejčce and Marko (Figs. 665-666 and 668). The two angels flanking the Virgin in Valsamonero do not appear elsewhere.

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, reveals in Valsamonero Christ tearing the *cheirophon* in the middle (Figs. 58 and 680). The appearance of Adam and Eve in the groups flanking Christ is an unusual detail in the decoration of this oikos. They are possibly also included in the badly preserved scenes in Meronas and Ochrid (Figs. 331 and 679 and 682).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is decorated in Valsamonero and Vori in a very similar iconography (Figs. 59, 35 and 691-692). An enthroned Virgin with the Child is flanked by bishops and cantors. Two cantors in Valsamonero make a musical gesture, a unique case in Crete but not unusual elsewhere. An emperor is depicted on the right of the scene in Vori, and a child with a book behind him. A similar iconography for this oikos, but with less figures and restricted variety of costumes, is also seen in Roustika, Meronas and Ochrid (Figs. 17, 337 and 689-694). An emperor also appears in Marko and Cozia, but in a liturgical scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin, and in the Uspenskij icon and St. Ferapont, venerating an icon painted on the façade of a Russian church (Figs. 133, 146, 283, 293 and 697-700).

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, reveals in Valsamonero and Vori a standing Virgin in front of a large curtain flanked by bishops, cantors and other figures (Figs. 36, 60 and 703-704). Two *lampadari* are depicted in Valsamonero, and an emperor on the right of the scene in both churches. A similar iconography is found again only in Ochrid, where details like the large drapery behind the Virgin, the cantors and the *lampadari* are also visible (Figs. 337 and 702). An emperor also appears in this stanza in Dečani, portraying Tsar Stephen Dušan (1331-1355), his wife Helena and his son Stephen Uroš (Figs. 321 and 711).

A comparison among the Cretan cycles reveals that those in Roustika and Meronas are so similar that one would be tempted to consider them as direct copies. However, the few differences established above suggest that both cycles had a common archetype, separated from it by only a few intermediate copies. The same is true for the group consisting of the Valsamonero Akathistos and the partially preserved cycles in Kavousi, the Hodegetria Monastery and in Vori. The two Cretan groups have between them several iconographic characteristics in common, which are also found in cycles outside Crete, mainly in Ochrid. This does not necessarily mean that the Cretan artists directly copied from Ochrid; it rather denotes that they and the Ochrid artist used a common archetype. The place where the Cretan archetype would be found is Constantinople. Although

under Venetian sovereignty, the artistic contacts with the Capital are attested in the visual arts and in documents. They are visible in the high quality in which several paintings on the island have been executed, and can be read in the Venetian documents from Crete, mainly kept in the archives of Venice.¹

Therefore, the Cretan cycles are of great importance, not only because they show better the cycle in Ochrid, which is badly damaged, but also because they give an idea of the Constantinopolitan Akathistos cycles which are now lost. The several exceptional iconographic features found in certain oikoi surely enrich the iconography of the cycles known till now. Among those already mentioned above, is the figure of the Virgin *Cheirophilousa* in the Hodegetria Monastery, which is not only unique among Akathistos cycles, but also one of the very few examples of this type found in Mediaeval art (Figs. 64-65). Other particularities are: The Magi approaching the Virgin and the Child on horseback in the Adoration of the Magi (Figs. 45). The personification of Babylon as queen or as a woman in eastern costume (Figs. 10 and 46). The more sophisticated way of interpreting a few oikoi, e.g. 14 (the Strange Birth) and 16 (the Incarnation of Christ), than in other cycles in some of which a variant of the Nativity scene has been chosen more than once. The depiction of the Virgin in a fiery mandorla for oikos 21, the Shining Lamp (Fig. 21). The depiction of oikos 24 showing angels presenting the Akathistos to the Virgin in the form of written scrolls, is unique among Byzantine cycles, and only preserved in Post-byzantine ones (Fig. 24).

The version of the Akathistos cycle seen in Roustika and Meronas seems to have been of importance for the Post-byzantine ones. Aspra Bardabake has drawn attention to the similarities between Roustika and the Post-byzantine Akathistos cycles in Garrett 13 in Princeton, Chelandari and Lavra.²

Constantinides concluded on the Akathistos cycle of the Panagia Olympiotissa in Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D., that the following iconographic features deviate from the other Paleologan cycles:³ The omission of the well from the Annunciation scenes; the rendering of an imperial Christ⁴ for oikos XIX (she means 18, our Figs. 76 and 620), rather than a variant of the Anastasis; and the inclusion of women in oikos 24 (Fig. 78, right), which represents a *unicum* in the illustrated Akathistos cycles, with the exception of Queen Jelena at Dečani.

¹ For the bilateral artistic contacts between Crete and Constantinople, see Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, 5-7, with the earlier bibliography.

² Aspra Bardabake, *Akathistos*, 138.

³ Constantinides, *Ellasson*, 169.

⁴ Christ Emmanuel on a throne is represented here, as mentioned above in discussing this oikos.

One may add the exceptional appearance of the young male figures in oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, and in oikos 21, the Shining Lamp, which substitute the adults seen in other cycles (Figs. 71, 76, 620 and 665). They form, along with the prominent appearance of young women, a distinct feature of this cycle; they may have been chosen as an allusion to the sons and daughters of the sponsor's family.

The three oikoi preserved in the Panagia *ton Chalkeon* in Thessaloniki, datable to the first quarter of the fourteenth century, are not sufficient to establish whether the cycle was of any particular interest, the more because these three oikoi do not show any idiosyncrasies.

The paintings of St. Nicholas Orphanos, ca. 1315 A.D., are of high quality, but the partially preserved Akathistos cycle reveals only one infrequent feature: A standing angel introduces the Magi to the enthroned Virgin holding Christ in oikos 9, who also appears in Dečani, Marko and the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 82, 91, 119 and 487-490). On the contrary, oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is distinguished by pointlessly including the three Magi in the Nativity scene, although they are not mentioned in the text and although they appear in the next three stanzas, which are devoted to them, as already noted (Figs. 80 and 450).

On the cycle in the Pantokrator church in Dečani, dated 1348-1350 A.D., one may observe that in the Nativity scene decorating stanza 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, the shepherds do not occupy such a prominent place as they should (Figs. 312 and 451).

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, reveals an angel in imperial garments riding on a white horse and showing the way to the Magi. In stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, a standing angel, wearing imperial garments with the *loros* and having his wings spread, introduces the Magi. He also appears in St. Nicholas Orphanos, the Marko Monastery and, less impressive, in the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 82, 91, 119 and 487-490).

The Magi in stanza 10 approach the city of Babylon riding over a bridge, a unique case among the decoration of this stanza in other cycles.

Stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, is decorated with a liturgical scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria (Figs. 88 and 657). Although an exceptional scene, it is less accurate in comparison with the scenes which show Christ, because it is Christ who is lauded in this stanza.

Stanza 21, comparing the Virgin to a lamp full of light shining to those in darkness, shows the Virgin alone (Figs. 320 and 667). Those in darkness, who are represented in a cave in most of the other cycles, are omitted, which means that the scene is abbreviated here.

Stanza 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, shows Christ again alone tearing up the Cheirographon, without believers flanking him.¹

Stanza 23, *Singing of your giving birth*, reveals good portraits of cantors flanking the Virgin holding Christ (Fig. 687), whereas in other cycles she is substituted by her icon in a liturgical representation (Figs. 697-698).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is illustrated with a liturgical scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria (Figs. 321 and 711). It includes the portraits the Tsar Stephen Dušan, his wife Helena and his son Stephen Uroš, who are the only figures to be identified with certainty among the kings appearing in other Akathistos cycles.

The Akathistos cycle in the Church of the Virgin in Matejče (1356-1360) reveals a large number of peculiarities in comparison with the other cycles: The Visitation of stanza 5 includes two maidens witnessing the earthy recognition of the Immaculate Conception by Elisabeth (Figs. 94 and 423). Stanza 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds decorated with a Nativity scene, does not sufficiently emphasise the role of the shepherd (Figs. 96 and 452). On the contrary, they appear as large figures in stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, where they should not (Figs. 97 and 479). This is one of the three cycles including a Nativity of Christ in the decoration of this stanza, with which the last verse, mentioning that the Magi reached the Child, is also brought in picture (Figs. 478-479 and 481). Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, adds a groom behind a wall in the background holding the reins of the horses, which is a rare detail (Figs. 98 and 486). Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, includes more figures than usually, among whom a second son of Joseph; the personification of Egypt is prominently depicted in imperial costume and holding a *cornucopia* (Figs. 100 and 517). Stanza 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, reveals Christ in the hands of the Virgin instead of Simeon, the latter mentioned in the text (Figs. 101 and 540).

Stanza 13, the New Creation, shows Christ Emmanuel standing in a mandorla and flanked by two groups of men (Figs. 102 and 557), whereas other cycles show him enthroned or substituted by an adult Christ. Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, is the first stanza decorated with the veneration of an icon (Figs. 104 and 568), whether the other cycles show an icon in stanzas 20, 23 or 24. Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, includes an imperial couple among the groups flanking Christ, which is an unusual detail for this stanza (Fig. 103). Stanza 16, the Astounded Angels, is unique in that the Virgin with the Infant is depicted standing, and one of the two groups of angels flanking her is substituted by seraphs (Figs. 105 and 595). Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, is

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 39-40, figs. 48a-b.

also unusually decorated by showing an icon of the Virgin venerated by men.¹ This is also true for stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns (Fig. 107). Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, also reveals an icon venerated (Figs. 111 and 710), with which the icons depicted in this cycle amount to four, the largest number among all cycles. The appearance of an icon in a stanza means that the decoration of this stanza is inspired by the liturgy, in this case the service of the Akathistos. Liturgical scenes may denote a developed stage of the evolution of the decoration of the cycle, initially decorated as close as possible to the text. If so, the cycle in Matejče represents one of the most advanced cycles.

The particularities of the partially preserved cycle in the Peribleptos church in Ochrid, dated 1365 A.D., may be summarised as follows: The decoration of the lower part of oikos 13, which fits better oikos 14, is iconographically almost identical to that seen in Valsamonero (Figs. 332 and 49). It is moreover the first oikos to include the figure of an emperor, who also appears in Valsamonero.

Oikos 17, the Voiceless Orators, showing the Virgin enthroned with the Child and flanked by orators, one of whom holds a box, is iconographically close to that seen in the Cretan churches (Figs. 336 and 604-607).

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, has preserved a part of the scene, which reveals Christ turning his head to an angel; the entire scene may be reconstructed as a variant of the Anastasis with the help of the corresponding pictures in Crete (Figs. 628-630).

Oikos 21, the Shining Lamp, is decorated with the Virgin holding Christ and 'shining' to those in darkness (Figs. 331 and 670). A similar iconography is seen in Roustika (Figs. 21 and 671).

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, includes the figures of Adam and Eve among the people flanking Christ, who tears up the *cheirographon* (Figs. 331 and 679). This closest parallel is seen in Valsamonero and Meronas (Figs. 680 and 682).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, showing the Virgin with the Child enthroned and flanked by cantors and a bishop, has also most of its parallels in Crete (Figs. 689-693).

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, reveals an orant Virgin in front of a large veil flanked by *lampadarioi* and cantors, striking details which are also seen in the Cretan churches of Valsamonero and Vori (Figs. 337 and 702-704).

The distinct iconographical features in Ochrid are also seen in Crete, which leads to the conclusion that they have a common archetype. This archetype was

most probably found in Constantinople, from where also the Cretan artists could copy.

The Akathistos cycle in the church of St. Demetrius in Marko (1376-1381) shows the following peculiarities:

In stanza 7, the shepherds, to whom the text is devoted, are missing, while the three Magi, who are not mentioned in this stanza, are added to the scene (Figs. 117 and 466). This means that the artist arbitrarily copied a Nativity scene without paying attention to the text of this stanza.

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, reveals an angel on horseback leading the Magi (Figs. 118 and 476). He also appears in Dečani and the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 91 and 223).

In stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, an angel introduces the Magi to the enthroned Virgin with the Child (Figs. 119 and 489); the angel, a rare detail for this scene, also appears in St. Nicholas Orphanos, Dečani and the Serbian Psalter (Figs. 487-488 and 490).

Stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, uniquely shows a groom with three horses, instead of the three Magi, appearing in front of Herod (Figs. 120 and 512).

Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, reveals unique iconographical features: the temple in Sotinen to which a child leads the procession, two camels following the Virgin, Joseph behind a hill and three women (Figs. 121 and 518).

Stanza 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, shows the Child in the hands of the Virgin instead of Simeon, the latter fitting better the text (Figs. 122 and 541).

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, is decorated with a deviating iconography showing the enthroned Virgin with the Child venerated by angels, which is not explained by the text of this stanza (Figs. 124 and 567).

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, is distinguished through the luxurious garments of the orators, a characteristic found in more figures of this cycle (Figs. 127 and 617).

Stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, shows angels on one side of Christ, which is a unique case for this stanza (Figs. 130 and 647).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is decorated with the procession of the icon of the Virgin in the presence of an emperor clad in Byzantine costume of the Paleologan era (Figs. 133 and 698).

Stanza 24, the Presentation of the Hymn, is also illustrated with a liturgical scene, in which clerics and cantors venerate the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria (Figs. 134 and 709).

¹ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 34, 69, fig. 69.

The Akathistos cycle in the Katholikon of the Holy Trinity in Cozia, dated ca. 1390 A.D., reveals the following particularities:

Stanza 4, the Conception of Christ, shows the Virgin in a mandorla that is connected with a segment in the upper part of the scene; it denotes the *Power of the All-highest* of the text, which descended and *overshadowed her* (Figs. 136 and 405).

Stanza 6, the Doubts of Joseph, emphasises more than the other scenes of this subject the cares and doubts of Joseph, mentioned at the beginning of this stanza, by depicting him twice: once seated and deepened in his thoughts and again reproaching the Virgin (Figs. 137 and 433).

Stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, includes a flying angel showing the way to the Magi (Figs. 139 and 502). This is a rare iconographic detail, borrowed from the Journey of the Magi.

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, reveals a standing Virgin holding Christ in a rhomboid in front of her chest and venerated by monks (Figs. 141 and 566). It is a unique but not an ideal iconography for this stanza. The other cycles show the figure of Christ, who is the one lauded in this stanza, or a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 559-565 and 569-572).

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, is also decorated with an imprecise iconography, showing Christ only once (Figs. 142 and 586). Most of the cycles depict him twice in order to denote his double nature: once in the upper part and again in the lower part of the scene (Figs. 574-585).

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, is decorated with an unusual iconography for this stanza (Figs. 143 and 622). It shows a standing Christ protecting two groups of men, one of which includes an emperor clad in contemporary imperial costume. Most of the other cycles are illustrated with an Anastasis variant (Figs. 626-630).

In stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, the appearance of the Virgin without the Child flanked by cantors is unique but incorrect (Figs. 144 and 666). This stanza lauds Christ and indeed the figure of Christ is venerated by various groups of people in other cycles (Figs. 645-655).

Stanza 21, the Shining Lamp, shows the Virgin alone holding a huge lighted candle (Figs. 145 and 659), while in other cycles she is usually flanked by one or more groups of people in dark caves (Figs. 661-666 and 668-671).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, is illustrated with a liturgical scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin (Figs. 146 and 697). The icon is flanked by an emperor and his dignitaries, among whom the *megas domestikos* holding his sword, and by cantors.

The artist of this cycle, next to a few innovations and inaccuracies, painted the Virgin and Christ more often than other artists in a mandorla (Figs. 136, 142 and 147). He also depicted Christ held by the Virgin in a rhomboid, instead of in a

clipeus (Figs. 141, 143, and 147). He represented two emperors, in stanzas 18 and 23, and only one liturgical scene with an icon of the Virgin (Figs. 143 and 146).

The Akathistos cycles in the manuscripts Synodal gr. 429, datable ca. 1360 A.D. and Escorial Codex R.I. 19, ca. 1400 A.D., reveal the following idiosyncrasies:

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, displays a unique iconography by showing the Virgin standing and three beams of light descending on her (Figs. 151, 173, 404 and 406). They represent the Power of the All-highest that overshadowed her. This is an early stage of the evolution of this stanza.

Oikos 9, the Adoration of the Magi, shows a singular iconography in both manuscripts (Figs. 158, 178 and 495 and 497). The Virgin with the Child receives the Magi on foot in the entrance of the Nativity, instead of sitting on a throne (Figs. 483-494).

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, reveals a very unusual scene, showing the Magi entering the city of Babylon on foot (Figs. 155, 179, 507 and 509). Other cycles mainly disclose the Magi approaching the city on horseback (Figs. 501, 503-506).

Oikos 11 is decorated with an exceptional scene and not with the Flight into Egypt, seen in most Akathistos cycles (Figs. 159 and 181). Two men stand in front of the city of Egypt, from which the idols fall, and praise the Virgin, depicted standing on the left without the Child. The artist of the Escorial manuscript added a half-mandorla to the Virgin with beams of light extending in the direction of the city, in an attempt to illustrate better the first words of this stanza: *By flashing the light of truth in Egypt*. However, he did not notice that it is not the Virgin but the Saviour, who is omitted from this picture, who flashed the light, as mentioned further on in this stanza.

Oikos 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, is illustrated with a reduced version showing only Simeon holding the Child and the Virgin (Figs. 156, 180 and 529-530). A similar but not identical reduced iconography is found only in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 243 and 528).

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, is decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 161, 183, 559 and 561). This is also seen in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 560, 562-563), whereas other cycles visualise the text of this stanza with a new scene, occasionally a sophisticated one (Figs. 564-572).

Oikos 15, the Double Nature of Christ, reveals in both manuscripts only an enthroned Christ Pantokrator (Figs. 162, 184 and 587-588), which does not fully visualises the double nature of Christ, alluded to in the text; other cycles show Christ twice, once in the upper, and again in the lower part of it (Figs. 574-585).

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, displays a unique iconography in showing Christ blessing in the direction of a group of men (Figs. 164, 187, 619 and 621). A more frequent and more developed decoration of this oikos shows a variant of the Anastasis scene (Figs. 626-630).

Oikos 21, the Shining Lamp, is distinguished from the other cycles by emphasising the candle, and by not placing the group of men in a dark cave (Figs. 169, 190, 658 and 660).

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, showing Christ approaching a group of men (Figs. 191, 166, 673 and 675), is less expressive than the iconographic type depicting him tearing up the *cheirographon*, *our old debts* of the text (Figs. 674, 676-682).

The iconographic similarities between the two manuscripts are so many, that one may conclude that the Escorial Akathistos is a direct rather than an indirect copy of the Synodal Akathistos.

The Bulgarian Tomič Psalter, Codex Muz. 2752 in the Historical Museum of Moscow, ascribed to ca. 1360 A.D., and the Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4 in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, datable to the last quarter of the fourteenth century, reveal iconographic particularities ranging from small details to whole scenes. They certainly contribute to a better knowledge of the diversity of subjects which decorate the Akathistos in the Late Byzantine era; they may be summarised as follows:

Maidservants are added to all three Annunciations scenes of the stanzas 1-3, which is an exceptional detail (Figs. 192-194 and 216-218). They increase to three in stanza 3 in the Tomič Psalter, decorated with the Annunciation at the Well.

Stanza 4 in the Tomič Psalter, the Conception of Christ, displays a significant interpretation of the text (Figs. 195 and 407): The Virgin with the Child are placed in a mandorla which is connected to a segment in the upper part of the picture; this proficient way of decorating stanza 4 reappears only in Cozia and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 136, 237, 405 and 408). The decoration of this stanza in the Serbian Psalter combines the upper part of the Tomič Psalter with the lower part of the customary iconography seen elsewhere (Figs. 219 and 409).

The addition of a maidservant in stanza 5, the Visitation, is rare but not unique (Figs. 196, 220 and 426-427).

Stanza 6, the Doubts of Joseph, reveals in the Serbian Psalter Joseph bending with outstretched hands in front of the Virgin (Figs. 221 and 448). This

may visualise the last verse of this stanza: *But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia."*¹

Stanza 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated with a Nativity scene, a full one in the Serbian Psalter, and a variant with the secondary figures limited to the shepherds and angels in the Tomič Psalter, by which the text is more accurately rendered (Figs. 198, 222, 461 and 465).

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, remarkably includes the cave of the Nativity, by which the last verse of this oikos, in which is mentioned that the Magi reached the Child, is also visualised (Figs. 199, 223, 478 and 481). The cave of the Nativity in this stanza appears again only in Matejče (Figs. 97 and 479). In the Serbian Psalter, an angel on horseback, depicted in an almost frontal attitude, shows the way to the Magi; it is a rare iconographic feature that also appears in Dečani and Marko, where the cave of the Nativity is, however, omitted (Figs. 91, 223, 474 and 476).

Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, displays in the Serbian Psalter an archaic iconography of the subject, by depicting the figures in a frontal and rather symmetrical arrangement (Figs. 224 and 490). The addition of the flying angel on the left is, however, a later iconographic feature, who is also seen in the decoration of this stanza, but standing, in St. Nicholas Orphanos, Dečani and the Marko Monastery (Figs. 487-489).

Stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, is decorated with a unique iconography: the Magi on foot approach an emperor on a throne, identified as Herod or the ruler of Babylon (Figs. 201, 226 and 510-511).

Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, displays an exclusive detail in the Tomič Psalter: a large radiating, blue halo surrounds Christ on the shoulders of Joseph, accurately visualising the first words of this stanza, according to which *the light of truth* was flashed by the saviour in Egypt (Figs. 202 and 514).

Stanza 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, exceptionally represents Joseph sitting in a corner and reading a book; no convincing explanation has been found for the attitude of Joseph in this scene (Figs. 203, 227 and 542-543).

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, is outstandingly decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene, which reappears only in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 205, 229 and 559-563).

Stanza 16, the Astounded Angels, is also unusually decorated with a variant of the Nativity of Christ (Figs. 207, 232, 589 and 591). It recurs only in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 246 and 590).

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, includes in the Tomič Psalter a unique detail: two fishes are painted in the lower right part of the mandorla of the Virgin

¹ Strzygowski, *Serbische Psalter*, fig. 129. Dufrenne a.o., *Serbische Psalter*, I, 263; II, fol. 213ro, facsimile in colour. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Akathiste*, 678, interprets the position of Joseph as a kind of excuse.

as an allusion to the characterisation of the orators in the text *as voiceless as fish* (Figs. 208 and 614).

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, is illustrated in both Psalters with a singular iconography among the decoration of this stanza elsewhere (Figs. 209, 230 and 623-624). It interprets the text in a more literal way than the more sophisticated one found elsewhere.

Stanza 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, preserved only in the Tomič Psalter, is exceptionally decorated with a scene deriving from the Anastasis (Figs. 213 and 683). It is again found only in the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons, and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 684-686).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is decorated in both Psalters with a liturgical scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin (Figs. 215, 234, 707 and 712). A similar iconography is seen in the Synodal manuscript, Elasson, Dečani, Marko, Matejče and the Skopelos icon (Figs. 706 and 708-711).

Every stanza, except stanza 4, is illuminated in both Psalters with a similar subject, but the arrangement and the number of figures in the various scenes differ. The Serbian Psalter is, thus, not a direct copy of the Tomič Psalter, but both Psalters have a common archetype, i.e., they belong to the same branch of the family tree of the Akathistos cycle. The large number of differences in the arrangement of each scene suggests that several intermediate copies existed between the two Psalters and the archetype. The closest cycle to the Psalters is that of the Skopelos icon.

The artist of the Serbian Psalter occasionally enriched his early model with features from more developed cycles. He substituted the Virgin in a mandorla in stanza 4, seen in the Tomič Psalter, by a Virgin enthroned in front of a large veil held by maidens, seen in several other cycles (Figs. 198 and 219). He also added an angel on horseback in the Journey of the Magi, who is not included in the Tomič Psalter, but appears in Dečani and Marko (Figs. 199, 223, 91, 118, 474, 476, 478 and 481). To the archaic frontal composition of Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, he added the half figure of a flying angel (Figs. 224 and 490), who is also seen in the decoration of this stanza, but standing, in St. Nicholas Orphanos, Dečani and the Marko Monastery (Figs. 487-489).

A number of stanzas, e.g., 8, 14, 16, 18 and 21, are painted in a narrative manner, i.e., the scenes illustrate as literally as possible the text. Three of them, 8, 14, and 16, are decorated with a variant of the Nativity.¹ This is contrary to the decoration of the corresponding stanzas in most of the other cycles, for which a different scene was invented; the latter represent a more advanced stage of interpretation of the text, and may consequently have been invented later than

¹ Stanza 7 is also illustrated with a Nativity scene but this is the rule for all cycles and not an exception.

those cycles which repeat a variant of the Nativity scene. The archetype of the two Psalters may, therefore, be considered as one of the oldest paradigms to the prototype, supposedly illustrated with more narrative than exegetical scenes.

As regards the seventeenth-century Belgrade Psalter, Strzygowski stated that the text and the iconography of the miniatures are different from those of the Serbian Psalter.¹ Nevertheless, he considered it is a direct copy of the Serbian Psalter and ascribed the differences to the copying artist. We have seen above, that all preserved stanzas in the Serbian Psalter have a similar iconography to the Tomič Psalter, except for stanza 4. The comparisons of stanzas 19-23 in the Belgrade Psalter, which are not preserved in the Serbian Psalter, to those in the Tomič Psalter, revealed that they are painted in a different iconography, except for stanza 19. The closest parallels to the Belgrade Psalter for stanzas 19, 20, and 22 are found in Marko, while stanza 21, comparing the Virgin to a shining lamp in darkness, is unique among all extant Akathistos cycles. These findings about the stanzas in the Belgrade Psalter and the differences established by Strzygowski for the miniatures outside the Akathistos cycle in the Serbian and the Belgrade Psalters lead to the conclusion that the latter is not a copy of the former. The missing stanzas in the Serbian Psalter have not thus been preserved in the Belgrade Psalter and if one wishes to get an idea of their iconography, he must look at the Tomič Psalter.

The study of the Akathistos icon in the church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi on the island of Skopelos, ascribed to the first half of the fifteenth century, leads to the following remarks:

Oikos 4, the Conception of Christ, is decorated with an exceptional iconography, rendering *the power of the All-highest* that overshadowed the Virgin with a mandorla around her, connected with a segment in the upper part of the picture (Figs. 237 and 408). A similar, but not identical, iconography is only seen in Cozia and in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 136, 195 405 and 407).

Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, is decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene, adapted to fit the text of this oikos through the reduction of the secondary figures to the shepherds and angels; Joseph and the Bathing of Christ are, thus, omitting from the scene (Figs. 239 and 460).

Oikos 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, shows the Magi in an exceptional iconography entering the city of Babylon on foot, also seen in the Synodal and the Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 155, 179, 241 and 507-509). It misses the triumphal character appearing in wall paintings (Figs. 84, 99, 313 and 504-506).

¹ Strzygowski, *Serbische Psalter*, 121.

Oikos 11, the Flight into Egypt, is painted with a reduced variant showing only the Virgin with Christ on a pack animal following Joseph (Figs. 242 and 524). The latter enters the city of Egypt, by which no place is left for the personification of Egypt. A similar iconography is seen in the Kremlin icon (Figs. 269 and 525).

Oikos 14, the Strange Birth, adorned with a variant of the Nativity scene, reveals a remarkable detail (Figs. 245 and 563). The figure of Joseph reclining on a mattress substitutes that of the Virgin; it recalls the Dream of Joseph, but the angel is missing. A variant of the Nativity scene also decorates this stanza in the manuscripts (Figs. 564-573).

Oikos 16, the Astounded Angels, is also illustrated with a variant of the Nativity scene, which shows only the Infant and an animal in the cave and five angels above it (Figs. 246 and 590). This oikos is also decorated with a Nativity variant only in the Serbian and the Tomič Psalters (Figs. 207, 232, 589 and 591).

Oikos 18, the Salvation of the World, is adorned with a unique iconography, including Christ Anapeson looking at the Virgin (Figs. 248 and 625). The personification of Cosmos is depicted in a cave below them. The latter also appears in the decoration of this stanza in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 623-624).

In oikos 20, the Defeated Hymns, monks, nuns and cantors venerate the icon of Christ instead of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria (Figs. 250 and 650). The latter is seen in Dečani and Matejče (Figs. 88, 107 and 657).

Oikos 21, showing the Virgin holding a lighted candle in the direction of a group of people in a dark cave, includes a unique iconographic detail (Figs. 251 and 662). On the flame of the candle, the figure of Christ is delineated in white; it renders *the incorporeal flame* lighted by the Virgin, as mentioned in the text of this stanza. The Virgin, oddly turning her head in the opposite direction of the people in the cave, also appears in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 212 and 664).

Oikos 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, is decorated with an Anastasis variant showing Christ approaching the cave of the underworld, in which Adam and Eve and a few righteous are visible (Figs. 251 and 684). This variant also appears in the Tomič Psalter, the Uspenskij icon and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 683 and 685-686). It illustrates the first words of this stanza, *the Redeemer of all mankind wished to cancel our debts*, whereas a more frequently painted variant shows Christ tearing the *cheirophon*, mentioned in the last verse of this stanza (Figs. 674, and 676-682).

Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, decorated with cantors praising the enthroned Virgin with the Child, reveals a large drapery in the background (Figs. 252 and 688). A similar, heavier drapery appears in Ochrid, Valsamonero and Vori, but in oikos 24 (Figs. 702-704).

Oikos 24, the Offering of the Hymn, is decorated with a liturgical scene showing the veneration of the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* (Figs. 252 and 708). The composition is asymmetrical, in contrast to the symmetrical one seen in

many other cycles illustrated with a liturgical scene for this stanza (Figs. 706-714).

The Skopelos icon enriches the iconography of the Akathistos cycles with new scenes and iconographic particularities. The following scenes are singular:

The Conception of Christ in oikos 4, decorated with the Virgin in a blue mandorla connected with a segment in heaven (Figs. 237 and 408).

The Strange Birth of oikos 14, showing Joseph, instead of the Virgin, reclining on a mattress in a variant of the Nativity scene (Figs. 245 and 563).

The Salvation of the World of oikos 18 including Christ Anapeson and the Virgin in a pensive attitude (Figs. 248 and 625).

The Defeated Hymns of oikos 20, revealing the veneration of the icon of Christ, instead of that of the Virgin (Figs. 250 and 650).

Unique iconographic details in the various scenes of the Skopelos icon are the following:

A book held by the Virgin in the Annunciation scene of oikos 1, which is a western iconographic detail, only rarely appearing in Byzantine art (Figs. 236 and 354).

The figure of Christ drawn in white on the flame of the candle held by the Virgin in oikos 21, the Shining Lamp (Figs. 251 and 662).

Particular elements, which are found only in a few other cycles, are seen in the following oikoi:

The Return of the Magi to Babylon for oikos 10 and the Flight into Egypt for oikos 11, show a Magus, respectively Joseph, entering the city (Figs. 241-242, 508 and 542). This iconographic feature is also seen in the Return of the Magi in the Synodal and the Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 155, 179, 241 and 507-509), and in the Flight into Egypt in the Kremlin icon (Figs. 269 and 525).

The angels above the Nativity cave, decorating the Astounded Angels of oikos 16 with a variant of the Nativity scene, are only found in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 207, 232, 246 and 589-591).

The personification of Cosmos in oikos 18, the Salvation of the World (Figs. 248 and 625), is again seen only in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 623-624).

The comparison of the Skopelos icon to the other cycles revealed that most similar scenes or iconographic elements are found in the manuscripts, especially in the Tomič Psalter. This suggests that the ultimate model of the icon may have been an illuminated manuscript. The Skopelos icon should be, therefore, placed in the same branch of the family tree of the pictorial cycle of the Akathistos with the manuscripts.

The icon no. 3039 in the Kremlin Museums of Moscow, datable to the beginning of the fifteenth century, is unique because three of the ten stanzas painted in this icon are decorated with more than one scene (Figs. 253-269, 348-351). Stanzas 1 and 3 are decorated with four scenes each, and stanza 7 with three scenes.

The first additional scene to stanza 1 shows the Virgin pulling Adam out of the underworld (Fig. 255). This scene is inspired by the first three salutations to the Virgin, the third of which praises her as *redemption of fallen Adam*. The second additional scene to the first stanza reveals the Virgin pulling Eve out of Hades (Fig. 256). It visualises the fourth salutation of this stanza, which reads: *Hail, deliverance of the tears of Eve*. The third additional scene decorating stanza 1 displays the Virgin with the Child on a throne, venerated by three men in proskynesis (Fig. 257). The picture may be associated with the *chaitismoi* 7-13, written on it.

The first additional scene to stanza 3 portrays the Virgin holding a ladder and the Child descending it (Fig. 259). It decorates the eleventh *chaitismos* of this stanza, *Hail celestial ladder by which God has descended*. The second additional scene to this stanza shows the Virgin standing on the lower stairs of a construction supposed to represent a bridge¹ (Fig. 260). The text of *chaitismos* no. 8 is written in the upper part of this picture: *Hail, bridge that bears men from earth to heaven*. The third additional scene to stanza 3 reveals Christ on the lap of the enthroned Virgin, casting beams of light to a cave, where a fire burns² (Fig. 261). The ninth *chaitismos*, *hail to you, mysterious mother of light*, written in the upper part of the scene, identifies Christ as light, and one may suggest that the fire in the cave alludes to the Child born in the grotto of Bethlehem.

Stanza 7 (*ikos* 4), the Adoration of the Shepherds, is embellished with three scenes. The first one shows a variant of the Nativity, but the shepherds and the angels have been omitted³ (Fig. 264). A separate scene shows two shepherds focussing on a blue compartment in the sky, in which three angels are painted recalling the Holy Trinity (Figs. 265 and 449). The third scene shows the Virgin with the Child venerated by men, and by angels in a blue compartment above (Fig. 266). The men symbolise the earth and the angels the skies, as mentioned in the fifth stanza of this *chaitismos*: *hail, for the skies rejoice with the earth*.⁴

A distinctive feature in the decoration of stanza 6 (*kondak* 4), the Doubts of Joseph, is the appearance of the bust of Christ Emmanuel on the chest of the Virgin, painted in grisaille in a blue clipeus⁵ (Figs. 263, 351 and 444). It is copied

¹ It is the third picture (no. 8) in the second row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

² It is the fourth picture (no. 9) in the second row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

³ It is the second picture (no. 12) in the third row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

⁴ It is the fourth picture (no. 14) in the third row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

⁵ It is the first picture (no. 11) in the third row of the icon (Figs. 253 and 348-349).

from a scene of the Annunciation of the Virgin, as the few preserved examples of this type of Virgin attest.¹

The superb icon no. 1065 in the Uspenskij Sobor of the Moscow Kremlin, datable to the second half of the fourteenth century, shows a large number of unique scenes and iconographic details (Figs. 271 and 346-347).

Stanza 4 (*kondak* 3), the Conception of Christ, is decorated with an Annunciation scene, the fourth one in this icon² (Figs. 279 and 402). This was the usual way for representing the conception of Christ, before new subjects were invented for this stanza in the Akathistos cycles (Figs. 403-419).

Stanza 5 (*ikos* 3), the Visitation, includes a female servant at the entrance of the building on the left, who witnesses the earthy recognition of the Immaculate Conception by Elisabeth³ (Figs. 275 and 424). This is a rare but not unique iconographic detail, because one or two maidens also appear in other cycles (Figs. 422-423 and 426-427).

Stanza 6 (*kondak* 4), the Doubts of Joseph,⁴ showing the Virgin standing in a higher level than Joseph, and the latter slightly bending in front of her, instead of accusing her, visualises the most significant verse of this stanza: *But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia."* It represents one of the distinctive features of the Russian Akathistos.

Stanza 7 (*ikos* 4), the Adoration of the Shepherds, emphasises their importance by including them in a reduced variant of the Nativity⁵ (Figs. 275 and 456). One of the two shepherds depicted here holds a lamb; the word *lamb* appears in the text.

Stanza 12 (*kondak* 7), the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, correctly shows Simeon holding Christ, but strangely reveals Joseph behind Simeon, and the Prophetess Anna behind the Virgin⁶ (Figs. 281 and 536).

Stanza 13 (*ikos* 7) uniquely represents the New Creation as a Gospel book on a lectern, which the Creator in the figure of Christ shows to a group of men⁷ (Figs. 282 and 558). The book may also allude to the Virgin, mentioned in the

¹ They are the Sinai icon and the Ustjuk Annunciation, mentioned above in discussing the additional scenes to the first stanza of this icon (Figs. 301-302 and 719).

² Stanza 4 is picture no. 18, the fourth one of the second horizontal row from below (Figs. 346-347).

³ Stanza 5 is picture no. 19, the last one of the second horizontal row from below (Figs. 346-347).

⁴ Stanza 6 is picture no. 20, the first one in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁵ Stanza 7 is picture no. 21, the second one in the lower row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁶ Stanza 12 is picture no. 2, the second scene in the upper row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁷ Stanza 13 is picture no. 7, the second scene in the second row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

second part of this stanza, who is moreover lauded by hymnographers as *sealed book, volume of new mystery*, etc.¹

Stanza 14 (*kondak* 8), the Strange Birth, is decorated with two groups of standing monks venerating the Virgin with the Child, who are shown blessing with outstretched hands in the upper part of the picture² (Figs. 282 and 573). The division of the picture in an upper and a lower part is similar to one of the three main types decorating this stanza in other Byzantine cycles, but the figure of Christ there is substituted in the Uspenskij icon by the Virgin and the Child (Figs. 569-572). It is the closest picture to the description of this stanza in the *Hermeneia*,³ which suggests a Greek archetype.

In stanza 15 (*ikos* 8), the Double Nature of Christ is represented by depicting God the Father above and Christ below, instead of showing Christ twice⁴ (Figs. 276 and 581). This picture is also unique in revealing Christ flanked by the Virgin and St. John the Baptist in a Deësis composition, and by two prophets, in the addition of two hovering angels holding the symbols of the Passion, and in the placing of the throne of Christ above a cave with supplicants. All figures can be explained by the text and the salutations of this stanza.

Stanza 17 (*ikos* 9), the Voiceless Orators, is embellished with a different composition than in the other cycles⁵ (Figs. 278 and 612). The orators flanking the enthroned Virgin are represented by people of different ranks and nationalities: bishops, kings and various men are shown desperately searching in their scripts in order to explain the virginity of the Mother of God. This scene is perhaps the closest one to the description of this stanza in the *Hermeneia*, which contains details missing in other cycles.⁶

Stanza 18 (*kondak* 10), the Salvation of the World, is decorated with a different subject from that seen in other cycles. It shows the Helkomenos⁷ (Figs. 284 and 631) instead of the Anastasis, the latter painted in more cycles (Figs. 626-630). The salvation of the world is thus interpreted with the Passion of Christ, instead of his Resurrection. The Helkomenos is a characteristic of the

¹ St. John of Damascus (ca. 650-750) in Migne, *PG*, 96, 692B (Second Homily on the Birth of the Virgin). St. Andrew of Crete, born in Damascus ca. 660 A.D., in his homily on the Dormition of the Virgin, III, also calls the Virgin *living book* and *volume of the new testament written by God*. Migne, *PG*, 97, 1097A. Theodore Studites (759-826), in his fifth homily on the Dormition of the Virgin, calls her *holy bible* and refers to Jeremiah, 24, 12-13.

² It is picture no. 6, the first one in the second row from above (Figs. 346-347).

³ *Heaven and on it the Virgin and Child seated on a throne; below the heaven is a crowd of hosioi looking up to heaven. Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

⁴ Stanza 15 is picture no. 11, the third scene from above in the left vertical row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁵ Stanza 17 is picture no. 12, the third scene in vertical right row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁶ *The Virgin with the Child seated on a throne and to the right and to the left of her men, young and old, wearing on their heads fur hats or kerchiefs wound, in wonder, and at their feet lie books on the ground, open and closed. Hermeneia*, 149; Hetherington, *Painter's Manual*, 52.

⁷ Stanza 18 is picture no. 9, the fourth scene in the second row from above (Figs. 346-347).

Russian Akathistos and appears, e.g., in the St. Ferapont Monastery and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg¹ (Figs. 288, 520 and 632).

Stanza 19 (*ikos* 10), the Defence of Virgins, shows the Virgin on a pedestal with spread *maphorion*, as if to protect under it the nuns flanking her² (Figs. 283 and 640). The red girdle held by the Virgin is a distinct Russian iconographic feature, copied from the Virgin appearing in Moscow iconographic type of the *Pokrov* (*Protecting Veil*) (Fig. 722).

Stanza 20 (*kondak* 11), the Defeated Hymns, is also painted in a different iconography than the Byzantine one³ (Figs. 285 and 653). Christ is painted in front of a tower-like building, flanked by bishops who appear from behind a hill and praise him. A river is shown in the lower part of the scene and people, some in ecstatic attitudes, are depicted around a well or basin.

Stanza 21 (*ikos* 11), the Shining Lamp, shows the Virgin holding a candle and lightening the people painted in a dark cave⁴ (Figs. 281 and 663). It is similar to other cycles, but the addition of the two figures flanking her above the cave is unique.

Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12), the Cancellation of the Old Debts,⁵ is visualised by an Anastasis variant, in which Christ resurrects Adam and at the same time seizes the *cheirophon* from the hands of Satan⁶ (Figs. 283, 286 and 686). This is also a characteristic of the Russian Akathistos cycle, repeated in St. Ferapont and in the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg⁷ (Fig. 292, 295 and 685). The Tomič Psalter and the Skopelos icon, which are the only two cycles outside Russia decorated with an Anastasis variant, do not show the tearing of the *cheirophon* (Figs. 213, 251 and 683-684).

Stanza 23 (*ikos* 12) reveals a Russian church with the icon of the Virgin painted on the façade, lauded by an imperial couple and bishops⁸ (Figs. 283 and 699). Along with St. Ferapont, it is the only variant that visualises the comparison of the Virgin to a temple, mentioned in the text of this stanza. The Byzantine cycles decorate the first words of this stanza, *we sing your giving birth*, and show the Virgin or her icon praised by clerics, cantors and occasionally an emperor (Figs. 687-698).

¹ Stanza 18 is the first scene in the lower row of the icon.

² Stanza 19 is picture no. 3, the third scene in the upper row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

³ Stanza 20 is picture no. 10, the second scene from above in the right vertical row of the icon (Figs. 346-347). The beginning of the text of this *ikos* is also written in Greek in the upper right corner.

⁴ Stanza 21 is the first scene of the icon, in the upper left corner.

⁵ It is picture no. 5, the last one in the upper row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

⁶ According to a legend, as already mentioned above, the *cheirophon* was the 'contract' that God drew up with Adam, implying the tree of knowledge (Genesis, 2:17), and that it was in the possession of Satan.

⁷ Stanza 21 is the fifth scene of the lower row of the icon.

⁸ Stanza 23 is picture no. 4, the fourth scene in the upper row of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

Stanza 24 (*kondak* 13), the Offering of the Hymn, is illustrated with the procession of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria¹ (Figs. 278 and 713). The same subject, but in a different iconography, is found in many other cycles (Figs. 706-712).

The different iconography of several stanzas in the Uspenskij icon from that seen in the Balkan cycles, and especially the different subject decorating the Prooemium and stanzas 4, 3, 18 and 20, form a distinct variant of the Akathistos cycle, which I called the Russian variant. The Uspenskij icon is the earliest preserved example, but it is a copy of a lost earlier cycle. The archetype may have not been entirely invented in Russia, but it was certainly established there, as the later examples, e.g., in St. Ferapont and the icon of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, examined above, confirm.

The stanzas in the Uspenskij icon are arranged in disorder around the Virgin with the Prophets² (Figs. 271 and 346-347). They start with stanza 21 in the upper left corner and end with stanza 10 in the lower left corner. This disorder reveals that the artist did not know the correct sequence of the pictures; he most probably copied an Akathistos cycle from the wall paintings of a domed church, where the stanzas are not painted one after the other.

The following stanzas include the veneration of an icon, which suggests that the decoration of these stanzas was inspired by the liturgy and that they reveal a later stage of the evolution of the iconography of these stanzas:

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, in Matejče (Figs. 104 and 568).

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, in Matejče.³

Stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, in Dečani and Matejče (Figs. 88, 107 and 657).

In the Skopelos icon the icon of Christ is venerated (Figs. 250 and 650).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, in Elason, Marko and Cozia (Figs. 78, 133, 146 and 697-698).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, in Elason, Dečani, Marko, Matejče, the Synodal Akathistos, the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons, and in St. Ferapont (Figs. 78, 111, 134, 167, 215, 234, 252, 278, 294, 321 and 706-715).

¹ It is picture no. 14, the fourth one from above on the right side of the icon (Figs. 346-347).

² The Greek name for this scene is, Ἀνωθεν οἱ Προφῆται (the *Prophets from Above*), and the Russian one, *Pochvala Bogomateri* (the Praise of the Mother of God).

³ Pätzold, *Akathistos*, 34, 69, fig. 69.

Emperors, imperial couples or imperial families appear in the following stanzas:

Stanza 13, which should be 14, the Strange Birth, in Ochrid and Valsamonero (Figs. and 549, 332 and 69-570).

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, in Matjče (Fig. 103).

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, in Cozia (Figs. 143 and 622).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, in Marko, Cozia, Vori, the Uspenskij icon and St. Ferapont (Figs. 35, 133, 146, 283, 293, 692 and 697-700).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, in Dečani, Valsamonero, Vori, St. Ferapont and in the Prooemium of the Uspenskij icon, which may have been interchanged with stanza 24 (Figs. 36, 60, 276, 294, 321, 703-704, 711 and 714-715).

From all these portraits, only those of Tsar Stephen Dušan, his wife Helena and his son Stephen Uroš in stanza 24 in Dečani can be identified. The other portraits cannot be identified with certainty.

Variants of Nativity scenes also illustrate the following stanzas, along with those decorating stanza 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, in all cycles:

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, in Matejče, and in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters (Figs. 97, 199, 223, 478-479 and 481).

Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 158, 178, 495 and 497).

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, in the Synodal and Escorial manuscripts, the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 161, 183, 205, 229, 245 and 559-563).

Stanza 16, the Astounded Angels, in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 207, 232, 246 and 589-591).

Scholars have naturally wondered in what artistic medium the first illustrated Akathistos was executed; the opinions were, as expected, divided between manuscripts and wall paintings. That the Akathistos is a text and therefore the illustrated prototype must have been a manuscript certainly is an argument, but it would be better if it were also documented with iconographic evidence, which follows here: If my theory that the prototype was decorated in a narrative manner and the text was rendered as literally as possible, and that a more developed iconography and a more sophisticated rendering of the text only later took place, then most of the pictures in the manuscripts are those which fulfil these criteria. In the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, for instance, a number of stanzas, e.g., 8, 14, 16, 18 and 21, are not only painted in a narrative manner, but they also illustrate the text as literally as possible. Three of them, 8, 14, and 16, are

decorated with a variant of the Nativity.¹ In the course of time, new subjects were invented for certain stanzas. The comparison among only the six cycles in Crete reveals the existence of several variants of the cycles on which the Cretan churches were based; the variants increase beyond control when one compares the cycles outside Crete. If we also take into consideration the several exceptional scenes found in the Uspenskij and the Kremlin icons, a number of which were certainly based on Byzantine archetypes, the amount of the intermediate copies between the prototype and what has survived increases immensely. This makes us conscious, not only of the great number of the pictorial cycles of the Akathistos that have been lost, but also of the difficulties with which one is confronted in establishing the appearance of the prototype. Nevertheless, after having studied the Akathistos decoration for so many years and often lost my way in the labyrinth of the variants of each stanza, I should like to exit it with an attempt to reconstruct the prototype. My reconstruction will be naturally based on the Byzantine cycles which have been preserved, and on the theory that I suggested above:

Stanza 1, the first Annunciation scene, was decorated with a flying angel, which also explains the text mentioning that the angel came from above, as seen, e.g., in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, the Skopelos and the Uspenskij icons, and in Cozia (Figs. 135, 192, 216, 236, 279, 352-355 and 357). For stanzas 2 and 3, any regular Annunciation scene among those preserved could have appeared in the prototype.

Stanza 4 was also decorated with an Annunciation scene, which was the current representation of the Conception of Christ before a new scene for the Akathistos was invented; it is seen in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 279 and 402).

Stanza 5, the Visitation, was illustrated with a scene similar to any customary one from those preserved in the Akathistos cycles.

Stanza 6, the Doubts of Joseph, was embellished with a scene similar to that seen in the Uspenskij icon (Figs. 275 and 441). It shows Joseph slightly bending in front of the Virgin and standing in a lower level than her, which renders his acceptance of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, as written in the last verse of this stanza: *But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia."* A more important part of the text is, therefore, illustrated here than that mentioning his doubts, represented in other cycles with the figures making agitated gestures.

Stanza 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, was visualised with a variant of the Nativity scene, allotting a significant place to the shepherds and the angels, and

¹ Stanza 7 is also illustrated with a Nativity scene but this is the rule for all cycles and not an exception.

emphasising their importance by excluding the other secondary figures of the scene, as seen, e.g., in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 198 and 461).

Stanza 8, the Journey of the Magi, was painted with the Magi on horseback approaching the cave of the Nativity, with which the last words of this stanza, stating that the Magi reached Christ, are also rendered, as seen in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in Matejče (Figs. 97, 199, 223, 478-479 and 481).

Stanza 9, the Adoration of the Magi, was illustrated with the Magi approaching the Virgin with Christ in her hands, most probably in a simple scene, as that seen in Roustika, the Tomič Psalter and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 9, 200, 240 and 483-485).

Stanza 10, the Return of the Magi to Babylon, was most likely decorated with the Magi on horseback approaching the city of Babylon, identified as such with a personification at the gates, copied from the Flight into Egypt, as seen in Roustika (Figs. 10 and 503).

Stanza 11, the Flight into Egypt, was painted with a scene similar to that seen in the Tomič Psalter, which also visualises *the light of truth* that the Saviour flashed in Egypt and the fall of the idols, both mentioned in the text of this stanza (Figs. 202 and 514).

Stanza 12, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, was represented with a scene showing Simeon and not the Virgin holding Christ.

Stanza 13, the New Creation, revealed the adoration of Christ in the arms of the Virgin rather than Christ alone, as seen in several of the preserved cycles (Figs. 544-551). This type was chosen because the Virgin is also mentioned in text of this stanza.

Stanza 14, the Strange Birth, was decorated with a variant of the Nativity scene, visualising the words *birth* and *the great God appeared on earth as a humble man*, similar to that seen in the Synodal and the Escorial Akathistos cycles, the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Skopelos icon, which often follows the iconographical tradition of the manuscripts (Figs. 559-563).

Stanza 15, the Double Nature of Christ, was illustrated by depicting Christ twice, once in heaven and again on earth, seen in most of the preserved cycles (Figs. 574-585).

Stanza 16, the Astounded Angels, was embellished with angels around the cave of a variant of the Nativity scene, as found in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, and in the Skopelos icon (Figs. 207, 232, 246 and 589-591). The Nativity scene also visualises the words of the text *incarnation, a man approachable by all and living among us*.

Stanza 17, the Voiceless Orators, arrayed the orators in antique costume holding scrolls and looking in wonder at the Virgin holding Christ, as seen in the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 208 and 614). I have chosen it above the scenes showing figures in contemporary costume, because the latter, as Christians, would not be

at a loss for the mystery of her giving birth as virgin; the addition of the fish in the picture is also an attempt to render the text as literally as possible.

Stanza 18, the Salvation of the World, displayed a scene similar to those seen in the Tomič and the Serbian Psalters, in which as many as possible words from this stanza are visualised (Figs. 209, 231 and 623-624). Christ is depicted *as God* in a mandorla flanked by angels; the Virgin and the men are painted to show that Christ came *among us* in order to save the world, the latter represented by the personification of Cosmos.

Stanza 19, the Defence of Virgins, exhibited the Virgin surrounded by maidens, as seen in the Synodal Akathistos and its copy in Escorial (Figs. 165, 188, 633 and 635).

Stanza 20, the Defeated Hymns, exposed cantors among the men flanking Christ, substantiating the words *hymns* and *odes* in this stanza, as seen, e.g., in the Synodal and the Escorial manuscripts (Figs. 168, 189, 649 and 651).

Stanza 21, the Shining Lamp, was painted with the Virgin holding a huge candle and radiating light to those in darkness, seen in several cycles, among which the Skopelos icon, in which also the *incorporeal flame* of the text is visualised with the figure of Christ drawn in white on the flame of the candle (Figs. 251 and 662).

Stanza 22, the Cancellation of the Old Debts, was decorated with Christ tearing up the cheirographon, seen in several cycles (Figs. 674-682).

Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, was embellished with cantors praising the Virgin with the Child, as seen in several cycles, among which the Tomič Psalter (Figs. 214 and 695).

Stanza 24, the Offering of the Hymn, was visualised with various kinds of people, among whom cantors, singing the hymn to the Virgin with the Child, as seen in several cycles (Figs. 702-706).

I am fully aware that this is a hypothetical reconstruction and that more 'prototypes' may have been independently created in one or more places and at different dates.

THE AKATHISTOS HYMN

Greek text and English translation

Prooemium

Τῇ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ τὰ νικητήρια,
ὡς λυτρωθεῖσα τῶν δεινῶν, εὐχαριστήρια
ἀναγράφω σοι ἡ πόλις σου, θεοτόκε·
ἀλλ' ὡς ἔχουσα τὸ κράτος ἀπροσμάχητον
ἐκ παντοίων με κινδύνων ἐλευθέρωσον,
ἵνα κράζω σοι· 'χαῖρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.'

To you, Mother of God, champion and leader, I, your city. Delivered from sufferings, ascribe the prize of victory and my thanks. And may you, in your invincible power, free me from all kinds of dangers, that I may cry to you: 'Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.'

Stanza 1

Ἄγγελος πρωτοστάτης οὐρανόθεν ἐπέμφθη
εἰπεῖν τῇ θεοτόκῳ τὸ χαῖρε· καὶ σὺν τῇ
ἀσωμάτῳ φωνῇ σωματούμενόν σε
θεωρῶν, κύριε, ἐξίστατο καὶ ἴστατο,
κραυγάζων πρὸς αὐτήν τοιαῦτα·

A leading angel was sent from heaven to say to the Virgin: 'Hail.' And when he saw you, O Lord, becoming flesh, he was amazed and arose and cried to her with voice incorporeal:

1. Χαῖρε, δι' ἧς ἡ χαρὰ ἐκλάμψει.

1. Hail to you through whom joy will shine out.

2. Χαῖρε, δι' ἧς ἡ ἀρὰ ἐκλείψει.

2. Hail to you through whom the curse shall pass away.

3. Χαῖρε, τοῦ πεσόντος Ἀδάμ ἡ ἀνάκλησις.

3. Hail, redemption of fallen Adam;

4. Χαῖρε, τῶν δακρύων τῆς Εὕας ἡ λύτρωσις.

4. Hail, deliverance of the tears of Eve.

5. Χαῖρε, ὕψος δυσανάβατον ἀνθρωπίνους λογισμοῖς.

5. Hail, height unattainable by human thought;

6. Χαῖρε, βάθος δυσθεώρητον καὶ ἀγγέλων ὀφθαλμοῖς.

6. Hail, depth invisible even to the eyes of angels.

7. Χαῖρε, ὅτι ὑπάρχεις βασιλέως καθέδρα.

7. Hail to you, the throne of the king.

8. Χαῖρε, ὅτι βασιτάξεις τὸν βασιτάζοντα πάντα.

8. Hail to you who bear him, the bearer of all.

9. Χαῖρε, ἀστήρ ἐμφαίνων τὸν ἥλιον.

9. Hail, star that heralds the sun.

10. Χαῖρε, γαστήρ ἐνθέου σαρκώσεως.

10. Hail, womb of divine in carnation.

11. Χαῖρε, δι' ἧς νεουργεῖται ἡ κτίσις.

11. Hail to you through whom creation is reborn.

12. Χαῖρε, δι' ἧς βρεφουργεῖται ὁ κτίστης.

12. Hail to you through whom the Creator becomes a child.

13. Χαῖρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Βλέπουσα ἡ ἀγία ἑαυτὴν ἐν ἀγνείᾳ φησὶ τῷ Γαβριὴλ θαρσαλέως· 'Τὸ παράδοξόν σου τῆς φωνῆς δυσπαράδεκτόν μου τῇ ψυχῇ φαίνεται· ἀσπόρου γὰρ συλλήψεως τὴν κύησιν πῶς λέγεις κράζων· 'Αλληλουῖα.

Γνώσιν ἄγνωστον γνῶναι ἡ παρθένος ζητοῦσα ἐβόησε πρὸς τὸν λειτουργοῦντα· 'ἐκ λαγόνων ἀγνῶν υἱὸν πῶς ἐστὶ τεχθῆναι δυνατόν; λέξον μοι·' πρὸς ἣν ἐκεῖνος ἐφη· σεν ἐν φόβῳ, πλὴν κραυγάζων οὕτω·

1. Χαῖρε, βουλῆς ἀπορρήτου μύστις.
2. Χαῖρε, σιγῆς δεομένων πίστις.
3. Χαῖρε, τῶν θαυμάτων Χριστοῦ τὸ προοίμιον
4. Χαῖρε, τῶν δογμάτων αὐτοῦ τὸ κεφάλαιον.
5. Χαῖρε, κλίμαξ ἐπουράνιε, ἣ κατέβη ὁ θεός
6. Χαῖρε, γέφυρα μεταγούσα τοὺς ἐκ γῆς πρὸς οὐρανόν·
7. Χαῖρε, τῶν ἀγγέλων πολυθρύλητον θαῦμα.
8. Χαῖρε, τῶν δαιμόνων πολυθρήνητον τραῦμα.
9. Χαῖρε, τὸ φῶς ἀρρήτως γεννήσασα.
10. Χαῖρε, τὸ 'πῶς' μηδὲν διδάσασα.
11. Χαῖρε, σοφῶν ὑπερβαίνουσα γνώσιν.

12. Χαῖρε, πιστῶν καταυγάζουσα φρένας.

13. Χαῖρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

Δύναμις τοῦ ὑψίστου ἐπεσκίασε τότε πρὸς σύλληψιν τῇ ἀπειρογάμῳ· καὶ τὴν εὐκαρπὸν ταύτης νηδὺν ὡς ἀγρὸν ὑπέδειξεν ἡδὺν ἅπασιν τοῖς θέλουσι θερίζειν σωτηρίαν ἐν τῷ ψάλλειν οὕτως· Ἀλληλουῖα.

Stanza 2

The holy lady, seeing herself to be chaste, spoke boldly to Gabriel; 'The paradox of your words I find hard for my soul to accept; what do you mean when you speak of childbirth from a conception without seed, crying "Alleluia"?'

Stanza 3

The Virgin, yearning to grasp a knowledge unknowable, cried to the ministering angel: 'How can a son be born of chaste loins. Tell me?' He himself spoke to her in fear; yet this he cried:

1. Hail, initiate of secret counsel.
2. Hail to you, the proof of knowledge that demands silence.
3. Hail, prelude to the miracles of Christ.
4. Hail, the sum of his teachings.
5. Hail, celestial ladder by which God has descended.
6. Hail, bridge that bears men from earth to heaven.
7. Hail, far-famed miracle of the angels.
8. Hail, much-mourned affliction of the spirits of evil.
9. Hail to you, mysterious mother of light.
10. Hail to you, who taught nobody 'how'.
11. Hail to you, surpassing the knowledge of the wise.
12. Hail to you, illuminating the minds of the faithful.
13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 4

Then the power of the All-highest overshadowed her, planning the conception of one without experience of marriage; and she showed forth her fruitful womb as a sweet field for all who would harvest salvation by singing thus: "Alleluia".

Stanza 5

The Virgin, holding God in her womb, hastened to Elisabeth. And Elisabeth's little child knew at once her embrace, and rejoiced, and with leaps like songs cried to the mother of God:

1. Hail, vine of the unwithered shoot.
2. Hail, field of the immortal crop.
3. Hail to you who harvest the harvester, friend on man.
4. Hail to you who plant the planter of our life.
5. Hail, field that flourishes with a fertility of compassion.
6. Hail, table that bears a wealth of mercy.
7. Hail to you who make a meadow of delight to blossom.
8. Hail to you who make ready a haven for souls.
9. Hail, incense of mediation, gladly received.
10. Hail, propitiation of all the world.
11. Hail, goodwill of God to mortal men.
12. Hail, boldness of mortal speech to God.
13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 6

Joseph, a prudent man, was troubled within himself by a tumult of cares and doubts. He saw you unwedded and suspected illicit love, lady of no blame. But when he learnt of your conception by the Holy Ghost, he said "Alleluia".

Stanza 7

The shepherds heard the angels singing of the incarnate presence of Christ and, running as if to their shepherd, they saw him, a blameless lamb, pastured in Mary's womb; and in praise of her they cried:

1. Hail, mother of lamb and shepherd.
2. Hail, fold of the flock endowed with reason.
3. Hail, protection against unseen foes.
4. Hail, key of the gates of paradise.

Ἐχουσα θεοδόχον ἡ παρθένος τὴν μήτραν ἀνέδραμε πρὸς τὴν Ἐλισάβετ· τὸ δὲ βρέφος ἐκείνης εὐθύς ἐπιγνόν· τὸν ταύτης ἀσπασμόν· ἔχαιρε καὶ ἄλμασιν ὡς ᾄσμασιν ἐβόα πρὸς τὴν θεοτόκον.

1. Χαῖρε, βλαστοῦ ἀμαράντου κλῆμα.
2. Χαῖρε, καρποῦ ἐκηράτου κτῆμα.
3. Χαῖρε, γεωργὸν γεωργοῦσα φιλάνθρωπε.
4. Χαῖρε, φυτουργὸν τῆς ζωῆς ἡμῶν φύουσα.
5. Χαῖρε, ἄρουρα βλαστάνουσα εὐφορίαν οἰκιρμῶν.
6. Χαῖρε, τράπεζα βαστάζουσα εὐθηνίαν ἰλασμῶν.
7. Χαῖρε, ὅτι λειμῶνα τῆς ρτυφῆς ἀναθάλλεις.
8. Χαῖρε, ὅτι λιμένα τῶν ψυχῶν ἐτοιμάζεις.
9. Χαῖρε, δεκτὸν πρεσβείας θυμίαμα.
10. Χαῖρε, παντὸς τοῦ κόσμου ἐξίλσμα.
11. Χαῖρε, θεοῦ πρὸς θνητοὺς εὐδοκία.
12. Χαῖρε, θνητῶν πρὸς θεὸν παρρησία.
13. Χαῖρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

Ζάλην ἐνδοθεν ἔχων λογισμῶν ἀμφιβόλων ὁ σώφρων Ἰωσήφ ἐταράχθη, πρὸς τὴν ἀγαμόν σε θεωρῶν καὶ κλεψίγαμον ὑπονοῶν, ἄμεμπτε· μαθὼν δὲ σου τὴν σύλληψιν ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου ἔφη· Ἀλληλουῖα.

Ἦκουσαν οἱ ποιμένες τῶν ἀγγέλων ὑμνούντων τὴν ἑνσαρκον Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν· καὶ δραμόντες ὡς πρὸς ποιμένα θεωροῦσι τοῦτον ὡς ἀμνὸν ἁμῶν ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ Μαρίας βοσκηθέντα, ἣν ὑμνοῦντες εἶπον·

1. Χαῖρε, ἀμνοῦ καὶ ποιμένος μήτηρ.
2. Χαῖρε, αὐλὴ λογικῶν προβάτων.
3. Χαῖρε, ἀοράτων ἐχθρῶν ἀμυντήριον.
4. Χαῖρε, παραδείσου θυρῶν ἀνοικτήριον.

5. Χαίρε, ὅτι τὰ οὐράνια συναγάλλεται τῇ γῇ.
6. Χαίρε, ὅτι τὰ ἐπίγεια συγχορεύει οὐρανοῖς.
7. Χαίρε, τῶν ἀποστόλων τὸ ἀσίγητον στόμα.
8. Χαίρε, τῶν ἀθλοφόρων τὸ ἀνίκητον θάρσος.
9. Χαίρε, στερρὸν τῆς πίστεως ἔρεισμα.
10. Χαίρε, λαμπρὸν τῆς χάριτος γνῶρισμα.
11. Χαίρε, δι' ἧς ἐγυμνώθη ὁ Ἄδης.
12. Χαίρε, δι' ἧς ἐνεδύθημεν δόξαν.
13. Χαίρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.
5. Hail, for the skies rejoice with the earth.
6. Hail, for the earth chants in chorus with the heavens.
7. Hail, unsilenced mouth of the apostles.
8. Hail, invincible courage of the martyrs.
9. Hail, unshaken bastion of the faith.
10. Hail, brilliant token of grace.
11. Hail to you, through whom Hades was laid bare.
12. Hail to you, through whom we were clothed in glory.
13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 8

Θεοδρόμον ἀστέρα θεωρήσαντες μάγοι τῇ τοῦτου ἡκολούθησαν αἴγλη καὶ ὡς λύχνον κρατοῦντες αὐτόν, δι' αὐτοῦ ἡρεύων κραταιὸν ἀνακτὰ καὶ φθάσαντες τὸν ἄφθαστον ἐχάρησαν, αὐτῷ βοῶντες· Ἀλληλούϊα.

Stanza 9

Ἰδον παῖδες Χαλδαίων ἐν χερσὶ τῆς παρθένου τὸν πλάσαντα χειρὶ τοῦς ἀνθρώπους· καὶ δεσπότην νοοῦντες αὐτόν, εἰ καὶ δοῦλου ἔλαβε μορφήν, ἔσπευσαν τοῖς δώροις θεραπεύσαι καὶ βοῆσαι τῇ εὐλογημένῃ.

1. Χαίρε, ἀστέρος ἀδούτου μήτηρ.
2. Χαίρε, αὐγὴ μυστικῆς ἡμέρας.
3. Χαίρε, τῆς ἀπάτης τὴν κάμινον σβέσασα.
4. Χαίρε, τῆς τριάδος τοὺς μύστας φωτίζουσα.
5. Χαίρε, τύραννον ἀπάνθρωπον ἐκβαλοῦσα τῆς ἀρχῆς.
6. Χαίρε, κύριον φιλάνθρωπον ἐπιδείξασα Χριστόν.
7. Χαίρε, ἡ τῆς βαρβάρου λυτρουμένη θρησκείας.
8. Χαίρε, ἡ τοῦ βορβόρου ῥυομένη τῶν ἔργων.
9. Χαίρε, πυρὸς προσκύνησιν παύσασα.
- The sons of the Chaldaean saw in the virgin's hands him who with his hand creates men; they recognized him as master, although he had taken the shape Of a slave, and hastened to do him grace with gifts, and cry to the blessed virgin:
1. Hail, mother of a star that does not set.
2. Hail, dawn of a mystic day.
3. Hail, quencher of the furnace of deceit.
4. Hail, illuminator of the initiates of the Trinity.
5. Hail to you who hurled the inhuman tyrant from his dominion.
6. Hail to you who showed forth the Lord Christ, friend of men.
7. Hail to you that free us from the pagan worship.
8. Hail to you that deliver us from deeds foul.
9. Hail to you who put an end to the worship of fire.

10. Χαίρε, φλογὸς παθῶν ἀπαλλάττουσα.
11. Χαίρε, πιστῶν ὁδηγὲ σωφροσύνης.
12. Χαίρε, πασῶν γενεῶν εὐφροσύνη.
13. Χαίρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.
10. Hail to you who released us from the flame of passions.
11. Hail, guide of the faithful in righteousness.
12. Hail, joy of all generations.
13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 10

Κήρυκες θεοφόροι γεγονότες οἱ μάγοι ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς τὴν Βαβυλῶνα, ἐκτελέσαντές σου τὸν χρησμόν καὶ κηρύξαντές σε τὸν Χριστὸν ἅπασιν, ἀφέντες τὸν Ἡρώδην ὡς ληρώδη, μὴ εἰδὸτα ψάλλειν· Ἀλληλούϊα.

Stanza 11

Λάμπας ἐν τῇ Αἰγύπτῳ φωτισμὸν ἀληθείας, ἐδίωξας τοῦ ψεύδους τὸ σκότος· τὰ γὰρ εἰδῶλα ταύτης, σωτήρ. μὴ ἐνέγκαντά σου τὴν ἰσχὺν πέπτωκεν· οἱ τούτων δὲ ῥυσθέντες ἐβόων πρὸς τὴν θεοτόκον.

1. Χαίρε, ἀνόρθωσις τῶν ἀνθρώπων.
2. Χαίρε, κατὰπτωσις τῶν δαιμόνων.
3. Χαίρε, τῆς ἀπάτης τὴν πλάνην πατήσασα.
4. Χαίρε, τῶν εἰδώλων τὸν δόλον ἐλέγξασα.
5. Χαίρε, θάλασσα ποντίσασα Φαραῶ τὸν νοητόν.
6. Χαίρε, πέτρα ἡ ποτίσασα τοὺς διψῶντας τὴν ζωὴν.
7. Χαίρε, πύρινη στήλη ὁδηγῶν τοὺς ἐν σκότει.
8. Χαίρε, σκέπη τοῦ κόσμου, πλατυτέρα νεφέλης.
9. Χαίρε, τροφή τοῦ μάννα διάδοχε.
1. Hail, of men the restoration.
2. Hail, of demons the demolition.
3. Hail to you who trampled upon the error of deceit.
4. Hail to you who refused the lie of idols.
5. Hail, ocean overwhelming the Pharaoh of the mind.
6. Hail, rock giving water to those who thirst for life.
7. Hail, pillar of fire, leading those in darkness.
8. Hail, shield of the world, broader than the clouds.
9. Hail, sustenance, of manna the successor.
10. Hail, minister of holy delight.
11. Hail, promised land.
12. Hail to you, from whom flow milk and honey.
13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 12

Μέλλοντος Συμεῶνος τοῦ παρόντος αἰῶνος μεθίστασθαι τοῦ ἀπατεῶνος, ἐπεδόθης

When Simeon was about to depart from his life of deceit, you were given to him as an

ὡς βρέφος αὐτῷ, ἀλλ' ἐγνώσθης τούτῳ καὶ θεὸς τέλειος· διόπερ ἐξεπλάγη σου τὴν ἄπειρον σοφίαν κράζων· Ἀλληλούϊα.

Νέαν ἔδειξε κτίσιν ἐμφανίσας ὁ κτίστης ἡμῖν τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ γενομένοις, ἐξ ἀσπόρου βλαστήσας γαστρός καὶ φυλάξας ταύτην, ὥσπερ ἦν, ἄφθορον, ἵνα τὸ θαῦμα βλέποντες ὑμνήσωμεν αὐτὴν βοῶντες.

1. Χαῖρε, τὸ ἄνθος τῆς ἀφθαρσίας.
2. Χαῖρε, τὸ στέφος τῆς ἐγκρατείας.
3. Χαῖρε, ἀναστάσεως τύπον ἐκλάμπουσα.
4. Χαῖρε, τῶν ἀγγέλων τὸν βίον ἐμφαίνουσα.
5. Χαῖρε, δένδρον ἀγλαόκαρπον, ἐξ οὗ τρέφονται πιστοί.
6. Χαῖρε, ξύλον εὐσκιόφυλλον, ὑφ' οὗ σκέπονται πολλοί.
7. Χαῖρε, κυοφοροῦσα ὁδηγὸν πλανωμένοις.
8. Χαῖρε, ἀπογεννώσα λυτρωτὴν αἰχμαλώτοις.
9. Χαῖρε, κριτοῦ δικαίου δυσώπησις.
10. Χαῖρε, πολλῶν πταιόντων συγχωρησις.
11. Χαῖρε, στολή τῶν γυμνῶν παρρησίας.
12. Χαῖρε, στοργὴ πάντα πόθον νικῶσα.
13. Χαῖρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

Ξένον τόκον ἰδόντες ξενωθώμεν τοῦ κόσμου, τὸν νοῦν εἰς οὐρανὸν μεταθέντες· διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ ὑψηλὸς θεὸς ἐπὶ γῆς ἐφάνη ταπεινὸς ἄνθρωπος, βουλόμενος ἐλκύσαι πρὸς τὸ ὕψος τοὺς αὐτῷ βοῶντας· Ἀλληλούϊα.

Ὁλος ἦν ἐν τοῖς κάτω καὶ τῶν ἄνω οὐδ' ὅλως ἀπὴν ὁ ἀπερίγραπτος Λόγος· συγκατάβασις γὰρ θεϊκὴ, οὐ μετάβασις δὲ τοπικὴ γέγονε, καὶ τόκος ἐκ παρθένου θεολήπτου ἀκουούσης ταῦτα.

infant, but you were made known to him as a perfect God; and so he was astounded at your limitless wisdom, and cried "Alleluia".

Stanza 13

The Creator revealed a new creation, and showed it to us, his creatures. He made it flourish from a womb without seed which he kept chaste, as it had been before, so that we might see the miracle and sing her praises, saying:

1. Hail, flower of incorruptibility.
2. Hail, crown of chastity.
3. Hail to you who shine forth the pattern of resurrection.
4. Hail to you who show forth the life of the angels.
5. Hail, tree of brilliant fruit, from which the faithful are fed.
6. Hail, branch of fair-shading leaves, under whom many take shelter.
7. Hail to you who will give birth to the guide of wanderers.
8. Hail to you who bring into the world the liberator of prisoners.
9. Hail, conciliation of the upright judge.
10. Hail, forgiveness of many sinners.
11. Hail, robe of free intercession given to the naked.
12. Hail, love that conquers all passion.
13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 14

And let us, seeing this strange birth, estrange ourselves from the earth, and turn our thoughts to heaven; it was for this that the great God appeared on earth as a humble man; for he wanted to draw to the heights those who cry to him "Alleluia."

Stanza 15

The unbounded Word was complete among men below, and from Heaven above never absent; this was not merely a journey from place to place, but a divine condescension, the birth of a child by a

virgin possessed by God; and she heard the words:

1. Χαῖρε, θεοῦ ἀχωρήτου χώρα.
2. Χαῖρε, σεπτοῦ μυστηρίου θύρα.
3. Χαῖρε, τῶν ἀπίστων ἀμφίβολον ἄκουσμα.
4. Χαῖρε, τῶν πιστῶν ἀναμφίβολον καύχημα.
5. Χαῖρε, ὄχημα πανάγιον τοῦ ἐπὶ τῶν Χερουβίμ.
6. Χαῖρε, οἶκημα πανάριστον τοῦ ἐπὶ τῶν Σεραφίμ.
7. Χαῖρε, ἡ τάναντία εἰς ταῦτο ἀγαθοῦσα.
8. Χαῖρε, ἡ παρθενίαν καὶ λοχείαν ζευγνύουσα.
9. Χαῖρε, δι' ἧς ἐλύθη παράβασις.
10. Χαῖρε, δι' ἧς ἠνοιχθη παράδεισος.
11. Χαῖρε, ἡ κλεῖς τῆς Χριστοῦ βασιλείας.
12. Χαῖρε, ἐλπίς ἀγαθῶν αἰωνίων.
13. Χαῖρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

Πᾶσα φύσις ἀγγέλων κατεπλάγη τὸ μέγα τῆς σῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως ἔργον· τὸν ἀπρόσιτον γὰρ ὡς θεὸν ἐθεώρει πᾶσι προσιτὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἡμῖν μὲν συνδιάγοντα, ἀκούσαντα δὲ παρὰ πάντων· Ἀλληλούϊα.

Stanza 16

All the orders of the angels were astounded at the great act of your incarnation; for they saw, as a man approachable by all, him who was unapproachable as God, living among us and hearing from us all "Alleluia".

Stanza 17

Before you, mother of God, we see wordy orators as voiceless as fish; they are at a loss as they say: 'How is it that you are still a virgin and yet had the power to give birth?' But let us marvel at the mystery and cry out in faith:

1. Χαῖρε, σοφίας θεοῦ δοχεῖον.
2. Χαῖρε, προνοίας αὐτοῦ ταμεῖον.
3. Χαῖρε, φιλοσόφους ἀσόφους δεικνύουσα.
4. Χαῖρε, τεχνολόγους ἀλόγους ἐλέγχουσα.
5. Χαῖρε, ὅτι ἐμωράθησαν οἱ δεινοὶ συζητηταί.
6. Χαῖρε, ὅτι ἐμαράνθησαν οἱ τῶν μύθων
1. Hail, vessel of the wisdom of God.
2. Hail, treasury of his holy providence.
3. Hail to you who show the philosophers to be fools.
4. Hail to you who prove men of letters to be men of no wisdom.
5. Hail to you, for able disputers have been shown to be idiots.
6. Hail to you, for the fashioners of fables

ποιηταί.

7. Χαίρε, τῶν Ἀθηναίων τὰς πλοκάς διασπῶσα.

8. Χαίρε, τῶν ἀλιέων τὰς σαγήνας πληροῦσα.

9. Χαίρε, βυθοῦ ἀγνοίας ἐξέλκουσα.

10. Χαίρε, πολλοὺς ἐν γνώσει φωτίζουσα.

11. Χαίρε, ὁλκάς τῶν θελόντων σωθῆναι.

12. Χαίρε, λιμὴν τῶν τοῦ βίου πλωτῆρων.

13. Χαίρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

have been made to wither.

7. Hail to you who have torn apart the intricate scheme of the Athenians.

8. Hail to you who have filled the nets of the fishermen.

9. Hail to you who draw forth from the depths of ignorance.

10. Hail to you who illuminate many with knowledge.

11. Hail, boat for those who wish to be saved.

12. Hail, harbour for the sailors of life.

13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 18

He who set all things in order came to the world in his own will, wishing to save it. As God he was a shepherd, yet for our sake he came among us, a man like ourselves; and, calling like to like, as a God he heard "Alleluia."

Stanza 19

Virgin, mother of God, you are the defence of virgins, and of all those who run to you for protection. For the Creator of heaven and earth created you, immaculate lady, dwelt in your womb, and taught all men to address you:

1. Hail, pillar of virginity.

2. Hail, gateway of salvation.

3. Hail, leader of spiritual reformation.

4. Hail, giver of divine goodness.

5. Hail to you, for you have regenerated those who were conceived in sin.

6. Hail to you, for you have given reason to those without understanding.

7. Hail to you, for you have destroyed the corruptor of the mind.

8. Hail to you, for you have borne the sower of purity.

9. Hail, bridal chamber of a union without seed.

10. Hail to you who unite the faithful with the Lord.

11. Hail, good nurse of maidens.

12. Χαίρε, ψυχῶν νυμφοστόλε ἀγίων.

13. Χαίρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

12. Hail, bridesmaid of saintly souls.

13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 20

Ὑμνος ἅπας ἡττᾶται, συνεκτείνεσθαι σπεύδων τῷ πληθεὶ τῶν πολλῶν οἰκιρμῶν σου ἱσαριθμούς γὰρ ψάμμῳ ὥδᾳς ἂν προσφέρωμέν σοι, βασιλεῦ ἅγιε, οὐδὲν τελοῦμεν ἄξιον, ὧν δέδωκας ἡμῖν βοῶσιν· Ἀλληλούϊα.

All hymns are defeated that attempt to equal the wealth of your great compassion; for were we to offer you, holy king, as many odes as there are grains of sand, we would accomplish nothing worthy of what you have given to us, as we sing "Alleluia".

Stanza 21

Φωτοδόχον λαμπράδα τοῖς ἐν σκότει φανεῖσαν ὁρώμεν τὴν ἁγίαν παρθένον· τὸ γὰρ αὐλὸν ἄπτουσα φῶς ὁδηγεῖ πρὸς γνῶσιν θεϊκὴν ἅπαντας, αὐγὴ τὸν νοῦν φωτίζουσα, κραυγὴ δὲ τιμωμένη ταύτη.

We see the holy virgin as a lamp full of light, shining to those in darkness; for by lighting the incorporeal flame she leads everyone towards divine understanding, illuminating the mind with brilliance, and honoured by this cry:

1. Χαίρε, ἀκτὶς νοητοῦ ἡλίου.

2. Χαίρε, βολὴς τοῦ ἀδύτου φέγγους.

3. Χαίρε, ἀστραπὴ τὰς ψυχὰς καταλάμπουσα.

4. Χαίρε, ὡς βροντὴ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς καταπλήττουσα.

5. Χαίρε, ὅτι τὸν πολύφωτον ἀνατέλλεις φωτισμόν.

6. Χαίρε, ὅτι τὸν πολύρρυτον ἀνβλύζεις ποταμόν.

7. Χαίρε, τῆς κολυμβήθρας ζωγραφοῦσα τὸν τύπον.

8. Χαίρε, τῆς ἀμαρτίας ἀναιρούσα τὸν ρύπον.

9. Χαίρε, λουτὴρ ἐκπλύνων συνείδησον.

10. Χαίρε, κρατὴρ κινῶν ἀγαλλίασιν.

11. Χαίρε, ὁσμὴ τῆς Χριστοῦ εὐωδίας.

12. Χαίρε, ζωὴ μυστικῆς εὐωχίας.

13. Χαίρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

1. Hail, ray of the sun of the spirit.

2. Hail, shaft of light that does not set.

3. Hail, soul-illuminating lightning.

4. Hail to you who like thunder stun the foe.

5. Hail to you who kindle the light of many lanterns.

6. Hail to you who make the river of many streams to gush forth.

7. Hail to you who depict the pattern of the font.

8. Hail to you who take away the filth of sin.

9. Hail, basin that washes clean the conscience.

10. Hail, bowl that mixes together delights.

11. Hail, odour of the perfume of Christ.

12. Hail, life of the mystic banquet.

13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 22

Χάριν δοῦναι θελήσας ὀφλημάτων ἀρχαίων ὁ πάντων χρεωλύτης ἀνθρώπων, ἐπεδήμησε δι' ἑαυτοῦ πρὸς τοὺς ἀποδῆμους τῆς αὐτοῦ χάριτος· καὶ σχίσας τὸ χειρόγραφον ἀκούει παρὰ πάντων οὕτως· Ἀλληλούϊα.

The Redeemer of all mankind wished to cancel our old debts, and came himself to live with the fugitives from his grace; and having torn up the parchment he hears from them all "Alleluia."

Stanza 23

Ψάλλοντές σου τὸν τόκον ἀνυμνοῦμεν σε
πάντες ὡς ἔμψυχον ναὸν, θεοτόκε· ἐν τῇ
σῇ γὰρ οἰκήσας γαστρὶ ὁ συνέχων πάντα
τῇ χειρὶ κύριος ἡγίασεν, ἐδόξασεν, ἐδίδαξε
βοᾶν σοι πάντας.

1. Χαῖρε, σκηνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ λόγου.
2. Χαῖρε, ἁγία ἀγίων μείζων.
3. Χαῖρε, κιβωτὲ χρυσοθεῖσα τῷ πνεύματι.
4. Χαῖρε, θησαυρὲ τῆς ζωῆς ἀδαπάνητε.
5. Χαῖρε, τίμιον διάδημα βασιλέων εὐσεβῶν.
6. Χαῖρε, καύχημα σεβάσμιον ἱερέων εὐλαβῶν.
7. Χαῖρε, τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὁ ἀσάλευτος πύργος.
8. Χαῖρε, τῆς βασιλείας τὸ ἀπώρητον τεῖχος.
9. Χαῖρε, δι' ἧς ἐγείρονται τρόπαια.
10. Χαῖρε, δι' ἧς ἐχθροὶ καταπίπτουσι.
11. Χαῖρε, χρωτὸς τοῦ ἑμοῦ θεραπεία.
12. Χαῖρε, ψυχῆς τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρία.
13. Χαῖρε, νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

We sing your giving birth, and we all
celebrate you as a living temple, Mother of
God; for the Lord, who holds all in his hand,
dwelt in your womb and made you holy,
made you glorious, and taught us all to cry
out to you:

1. Hail, abode of God and Word.
2. Hail, holy one, greater than the saints.
3. Hail, ark, gilded by the Spirit.
4. Hail, inexhaustible treasure of life.
5. Hail, precious diadem of reverent kings.
6. Hail, holy exaltation of dutiful priests.
7. Hail, immovable tower of the church.
8. Hail, impregnable wall of the Kingdom.
9. Hail to you by whom trophies are raised up.
10. Hail to you through whom enemies fall.
11. Hail, care of my flesh.
12. Hail, protection of my soul.
13. Hail, wedded maiden and virgin.

Stanza 24

Ὡ πανύμνητε μῆτερ, ἡ τεκοῦσα τὸν πάν-
των ἁγίων ἀγιώτατον Λόγον, δεξαμένη τὴν
νῦν προσφοράν, ἀπὸ πάσης ῥύσαι συμφο-
ρὰς ἅπαντας καὶ τῆς μελλούσης λύτρωσαι
κολάσεως τοὺς συμβοῶντας· Ἀλληλουῖα.

O mother hymned by all, Mother who bore
the Word, most holy of all saints: accept
this present offering and deliver us from
every evil, and from the punishment that is
to come free those who cry together
"Alleluia."

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16. Oikos 16(14), The Astounded Angels (The Strange Birth), Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
17. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
18. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
19. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.

20. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
21. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
22. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
23. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
24. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
25. Oikos 1, Annunciation at the Well, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
26. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
27. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
28. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
29. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
30. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th century.
31. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th century.
32. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th century.
33. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th century.
34. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Church of the Panagia, Vori, Pyrgiotissa, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
35. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Church of the Panagia, Vori, Pyrgiotissa, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
36. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Church of the Panagia, Vori, Pyrgiotissa, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
37. Oikos 1, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
38. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
39. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
40. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
41. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
42. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.

43. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
44. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
45. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
46. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
47. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
48. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
49. Oikos 13(14), The New Creation (The Strange Birth), Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
50. Oikos 14(13), The Strange Birth (The New Creation), Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
51. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
52. Oikos 16, The Astounded Angels, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
53. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
54. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
55. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
56. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
57. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
58. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
59. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
60. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
61. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
62. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
63. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
64. Oikos 13(4), The New Creation (The Conception of Christ), Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.

65. The Virgin *Cheirophilousa*, detail of Fig. 64, Oikos 13(4), Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
66. Oikos 14, The Strange Birth, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
67. The sponsor Gregorios the priest, detail of Fig. 66, Oikos 14, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
68. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
69. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
70. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, detail, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
71. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
72. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
73. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
74. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, detail, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
75. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, detail, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
76. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
77. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
78. Oikoi 23-24, Singing Your Giving Birth and the Offering of the Hymn, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
79. Oikoi 5-6, The Visitation and the Doubts of Joseph, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
80. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
81. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
82. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
83. The Adoration of the Magi from the Christological cycle, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
84. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
85. Oikos 14, The Strange Birth, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
86. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
87. Oikos 16, The Astounded Angels, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
88. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.

89. Stanzas 2, 8-9 and 11-12, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
90. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
91. Stanzas 8-9, The Journey of the Magi and the Adoration of the Magi, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
92. Stanzas 11-12, The Flight into Egypt and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
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94. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
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98. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
99. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
100. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
101. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
102. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
103. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
104. Stanza 14, Strange Birth - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
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106. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
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108. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
109. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
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112. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
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116. Stanzas 5-6, The Visitation and the Doubts of Joseph, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
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122. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
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133. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth - Liturgical Procession, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
134. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
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139. Stanzas 9-10, The Adoration of the Magi and the Return of the Magi to Babylon, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.

140. Stanzas 11-12, The Flight into Egypt and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
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143. Stanzas 17-18, The Voiceless Orators and the Salvation of the World, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
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147. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
148. Oikos 1, Annunciation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 2ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
149. Oikos 2, Annunciation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 3vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
150. Oikos 3, Annunciation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 4ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
151. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 6vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
152. Oikos 5, The Visitation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 7ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
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155. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 15ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
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161. Oikos 14, Nativity - the Strange Birth, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 20vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
162. Oikos 15, Enthroned Christ (the Double Nature of Christ), MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 21ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.

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170. Oikos 1, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 2ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
171. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 3vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
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183. Oikos 14, Nativity - The Strange Birth, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 19vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
184. Oikos 15, Enthroned Christ (the Double Nature of Christ), Codex R.I. 19, fol. 20ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
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186. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 22vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
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188. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
189. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 26ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.

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191. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
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193. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 282vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
194. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 282vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
195. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 283vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
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203. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 288vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
204. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 289ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
205. Stanza 14, Nativity - The Strange Birth, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 290ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
206. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 290ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
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213. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 295ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
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217. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 211ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
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219. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 212ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
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224. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 214vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
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226. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 215ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
227. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 216ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
228. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 216vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
229. Stanza 14, Nativity - The Strange Birth, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 217vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
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231. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 219vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
232. Stanza 16, Nativity - the Astounded Angels, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 218vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
233. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 219ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
234. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 222vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.

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255. Stanza 1, Salutation 3: *Hail, redemption of fallen Adam*, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
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- Stanza 23 (*ikos* 12) The Living Temple; Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12) The Cancellation of the Old Debts.
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353. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Angel sent from Heaven, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 210vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
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368. Oikos 1, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
369. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
370. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
371. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
372. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 282vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
373. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
374. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Akathistos MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 3vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
375. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
376. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 3vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
377. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.

378. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
379. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
380. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
381. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 211ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
382. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
383. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th century.
384. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
385. Stanza 2, Annunciation at the Well, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
386. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
387. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
388. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 282vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
389. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 211vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
390. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
391. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
392. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
393. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
394. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
395. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
396. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th century.
397. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 4vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
398. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
399. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Akathistos MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 4ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
400. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
401. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
402. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.

403. Stanza 4 (*kondak* 3), Annunciation - the Conception of Christ, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
404. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 6vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
405. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
406. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Akathistos MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 6vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
407. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 283vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
408. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
409. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 212ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
410. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
411. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
412. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
413. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
414. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
415. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th century.
416. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, detail, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
417. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
418. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
419. Oikos 13, The New Creation, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
420. Oikos 5, The Visitation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 7ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
421. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 7ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
422. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
423. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
424. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
425. Stanza 5, The Visitation, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
426. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 284ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.

427. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 212vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
428. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
429. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
430. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
431. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
432. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
433. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
434. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
435. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
436. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Roustika, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
437. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
438. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 284vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
439. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
440. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
441. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
442. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
443. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
444. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
445. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Akathistos MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 9ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
446. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 8vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
447. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
448. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 213ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
449. Stanza 7, *The shepherds heard the angels singing*, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
450. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
451. Stanza 7, Nativity - *The shepherds heard the angels singing*, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.

452. Stanza 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
453. Oikos 7, Nativity - *The shepherds heard the angels singing*, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 10ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
454. Oikos 7, Nativity - *The shepherds heard the angels singing*, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 9vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
455. Oikos 7, the Adoration of the Shepherds, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
456. Stanza 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
457. Stanza 7, Nativity - The Adoration of the Shepherds, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
458. Stanza 7, Nativity - The Adoration of the Shepherds, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
459. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
460. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
461. Stanza 7, The Adoration of the Shepherds, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 285ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
462. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
463. Oikos 7, Nativity - The Adoration of the Shepherds, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
464. Oikos 7, Nativity - The Adoration of the Shepherds, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th century.
465. Stanza 7, Nativity - The Adoration of the Shepherds, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 213vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
466. Stanza 7, The Nativity of Christ, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
467. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
468. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 12ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
469. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
470. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 11vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
471. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
472. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
473. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Meronas, Amari, Crete, Church of the Panagia, ca. 1400 A.D.
474. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.

475. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
476. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
477. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
478. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 286ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
479. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
480. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
481. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 214ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
482. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
483. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
484. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
485. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
486. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
487. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
488. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
489. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
490. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 210vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
491. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
492. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
493. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
494. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
495. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 13ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
496. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
497. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 12vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.

498. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
499. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
500. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
501. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
502. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
503. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
504. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
505. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
506. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
507. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 15ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
508. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
509. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 14vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
510. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 287ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
511. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 215ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
512. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
513. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 215vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
514. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 287vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
515. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
516. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
517. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
518. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
519. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
520. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
521. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.

522. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, Panagia *ton Chalkeon*, Thessaloniki, first quarter of the 14th century.
523. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
524. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
525. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.
526. Oikos 11, *Flashing the light of truth in Egypt*, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 15vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
527. Oikos 11, *Flashing the light of truth in Egypt*, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 15ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
528. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
529. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 17ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
530. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 17vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
531. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
532. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
533. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
534. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
535. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
536. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
537. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
538. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Panagia *ton Chalkeon*, Thessaloniki, first quarter of the 14th century.
539. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
540. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
541. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
542. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 288vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.

543. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 216ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
544. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Tomić Psalter, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
545. Oikos 13, The New Creation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 18ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
546. Oikos 13, The New Creation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 18vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
547. Oikos 13, The New Creation, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
548. Oikos 13, The New Creation, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
549. Oikos 14(13), The Strange Birth (The New Creation), Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
550. Oikos 14(13), The Strange Birth (The New Creation), Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
551. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 216vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
552. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
553. Oikos 13, The New Creation, Panagia *ton Chalkeon*, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
554. Stanza 13, The New Creation, St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
555. Oikos 13(4). The New Creation (The Conception of Christ), Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
556. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
557. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
558. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
559. Oikos 14, Nativity - the Strange Birth, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 20vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
560. Stanza 14, Nativity - the Strange Birth, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 217vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
561. Oikos 14, Nativity - the Strange Birth, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 19vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
562. Stanza 14, Nativity - the Strange Birth, Tomić Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 290ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
563. Oikos 14, The Strange Birth, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
564. Stanza 14, The Strange Birth, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
565. Oikos 14, The Strange Birth, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
566. Stanza 14, The Strange Birth, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
567. Stanza 14, The Strange Birth, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.

568. Stanza 14, The Strange Birth - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
569. Oikos 13(14), The New Creation (Strange Birth), Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
570. Oikos 13(14), The New Creation (The Strange Birth), Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
571. Oikos 16(14), The Astounded Angels (The Strange Birth), Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
572. Oikos 14, The Strange Birth, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
573. Stanza 14, The Strange Birth, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
574. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
575. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
576. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
577. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
578. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
579. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Tomić Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 290ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
580. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Akathistos Icon with Koimesis in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
581. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
582. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
583. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
584. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 218ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
585. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
586. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
587. Oikos 15, Enthroned Christ (the Double Nature of Christ), MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 21ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
588. Oikos 15, Enthroned Christ (the Double Nature of Christ), Codex R.I. 19, fol. 20ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
589. Stanza 16, Nativity - the Astounded Angels, Tomić Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 291ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
590. Oikos 16, The Astounded Angels, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.

591. Stanza 16, Nativity – the Astounded Angels, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 218vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
592. Oikos 16, The Astounded Angels, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.
593. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century.
594. Stanza 16, The Astounded Angels, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
595. Stanza 16, The Astounded Angels, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
596. Oikos 14(16), The Strange Birth (The Astounded Angels), Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
597. Oikos 14(16), The Strange Birth (Astounded Angels), Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
598. Oikos 16, The Astounded Angels, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
599. Stanza 16, Astounded Angels, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
600. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
601. Stanza 16, The Astounded Angels, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
602. Stanza 16, The Astounded angels, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
603. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 21vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
604. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
605. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Church of the Panagia, Vori, Pyrgiotissa, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
606. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
607. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
608. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, detail, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
609. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
610. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
611. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 23vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
612. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
613. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 22vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
614. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 291vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.

615. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 219ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
616. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
617. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
618. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
619. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 25vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
620. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
621. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
622. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
623. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 292vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
624. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 219vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
625. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
626. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
627. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
628. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
629. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
630. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
631. Stanza 18 (*kondak* 10), The Salvation of the World - Helkomenos, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
632. Stanza 18 (*kondak* 10), The Salvation of the World - Helkomenos, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
633. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 26vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
634. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
635. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
636. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
637. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.

638. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
639. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter (after Strzygowski)
640. Stanza 19 (*ikos* 10), The Defence of Virgins, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
641. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 292vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
642. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
643. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
644. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
645. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
646. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
647. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
648. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter (after Strzygowski)
649. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 28vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
650. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
651. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 26ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
652. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 293vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
653. Stanza 20 (*kondak* 11), The Defeated Hymns, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
654. Stanza 20 (*kondak* 11), The Defeated Hymns, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
655. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
656. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Valachia, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
657. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
658. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 29vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
659. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
660. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
661. Stanza 21 (*ikos* 11), The Shining Lamp, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
662. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.

663. Stanza 21 (*ikos* 11), The Shining Lamp, Akathistos, Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
664. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 294ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
665. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.
666. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
667. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.
668. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
669. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
670. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
671. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
672. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter (after Strzygowski).
673. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.
674. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
675. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 31vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
676. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
677. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
678. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter (after Strzygowski)
679. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
680. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
681. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
682. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
683. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 295ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
684. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
685. Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12), The Cancellation of the Old Debts - Anastasis, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
686. Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12), The Cancellation of the Old Debts - Anastasis, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
687. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.

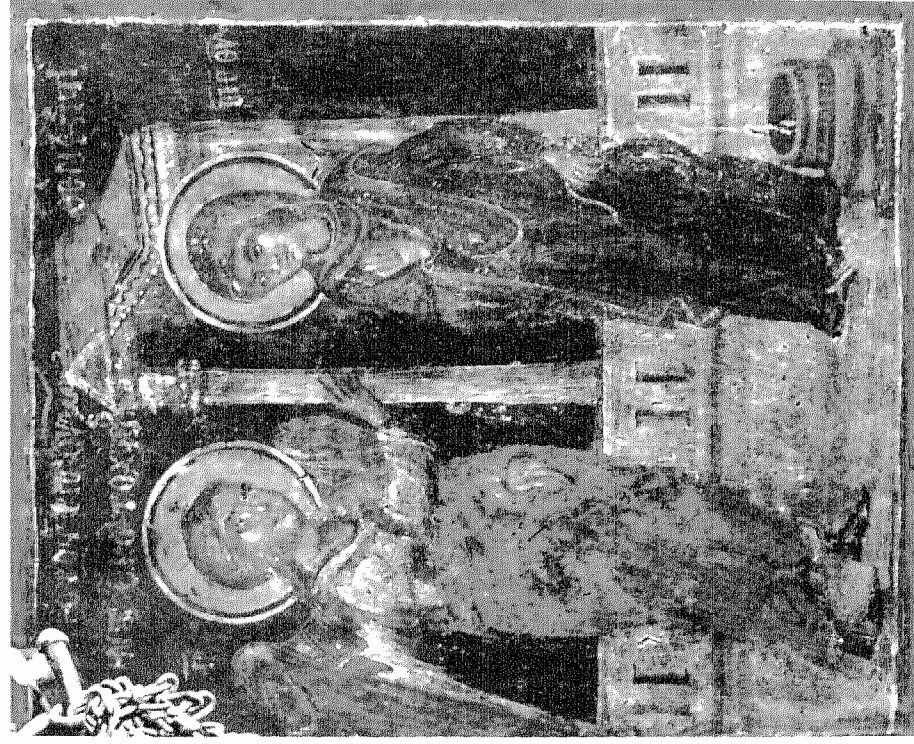
688. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
689. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
690. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
691. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
692. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Church of the Panagia, Vori, Pyrgiotissa, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
693. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
694. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter (after Strzygowski)
695. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 295ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
696. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
697. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
698. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth - Liturgical Procession, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
699. Stanza 23, Living Temple, Akathistos, Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
700. Stanza 23 (*ikos* 12), The Living Temple, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
701. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
702. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.
703. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
704. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Church of the Panagia, Vori, Pyrgiotissa, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
705. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.
706. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin, MS. Synodal gr. 429, fol. 33vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
707. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Tomič Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 296ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.
708. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Akathistos Icon in the Church of the Virgin *Zoödochos Pigi* at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.
709. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
710. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin, Church of the Virgin, Matejče, 1356-1360 A.D.
711. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, Pantokrator Church, Dečani, 1348-1350 A.D.

712. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the icon of the Virgin, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 222vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.
713. Stanza 24 (*kondak* 13), The Offering of the Hymn, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
714. Prooemium (*kondak* 1) Veneration of the icon of the Virgin, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.
715. Stanza 24 (*kondak* 13), The Offering of the Hymn, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.
716. St. John the Baptist preaching, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the fifteenth century.
717. The Virgin pulling monk Kaloeidas out of his sarcophagus, Psalter, Oxford, Christ Church gr. 61, fol. 102vo, 1391 A.D.
718. Prooemium and Oikoi 10-12, St. Peter on the island Veliki Grad, Prespa Lake, ca. 1360 A.D. (drawing after Knežević)
719. Ustjuk Annunciation, Tretjakov Gallery, Moscow, ca. 1200 A.D.
720. San Bernardino Madonna, painted by the San Bernardino Master, Siena, Pinacoteca, ca. 1270 A.D.
721. The Virgin *Cheirophilousa*, Monastery of Vatopedi, Mount Athos, fresco ca. 1600 A.D., silver 1859 A.D.
722. The Protecting Veil (*Pokrov*), Icon in the Vladimir-Suzdal Historical Museum, ca. 1500 A.D.
723. The Protecting Veil (*Pokrov*), Bilateral Icon, St. Sophia Cathedral, Novgorod, ca. 1500 A.D.
724. The Enrolment for Taxation, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
725. St. Gelasios and Coat of Arms of the Kallergis Family, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
726. Dedicatory Inscription, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.

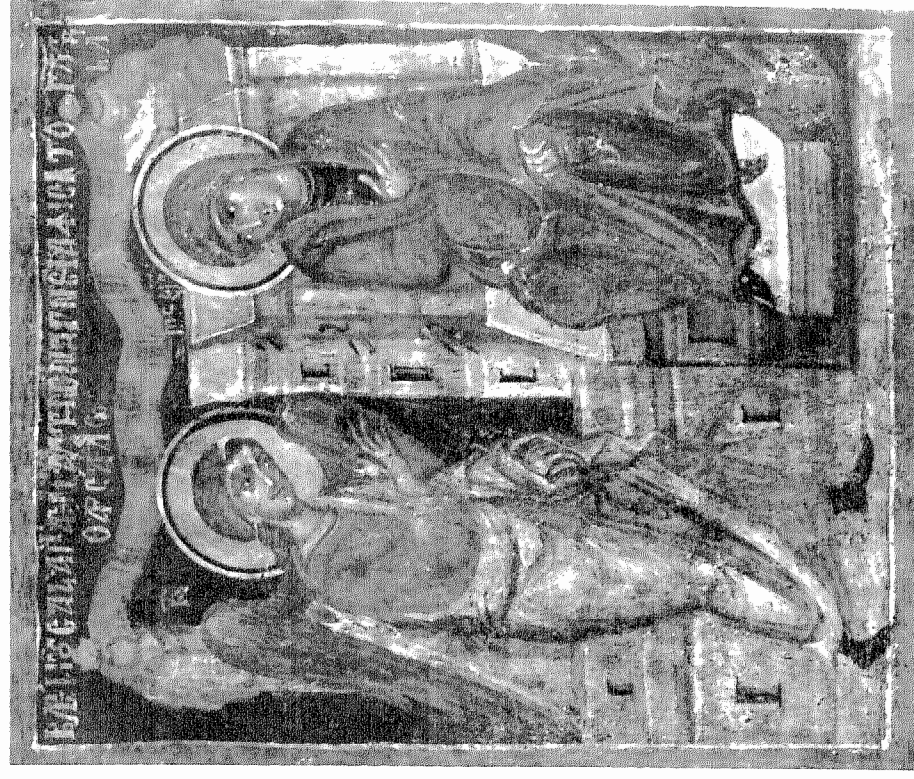
ILLUSTRATIONS 1-726

1-302 in colour

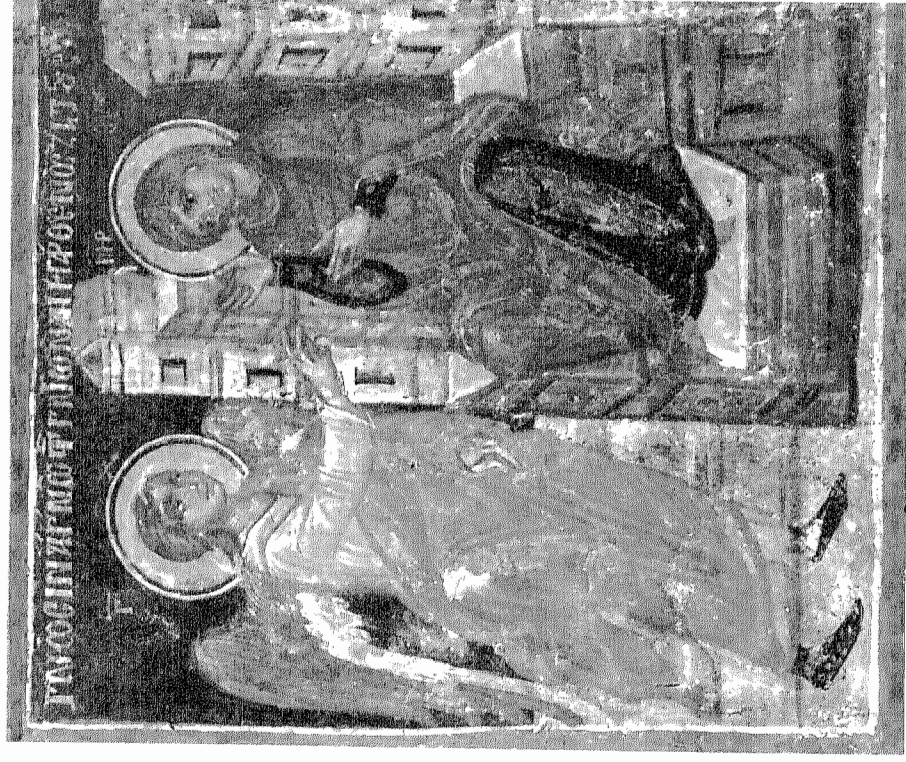
303-726 in black and white



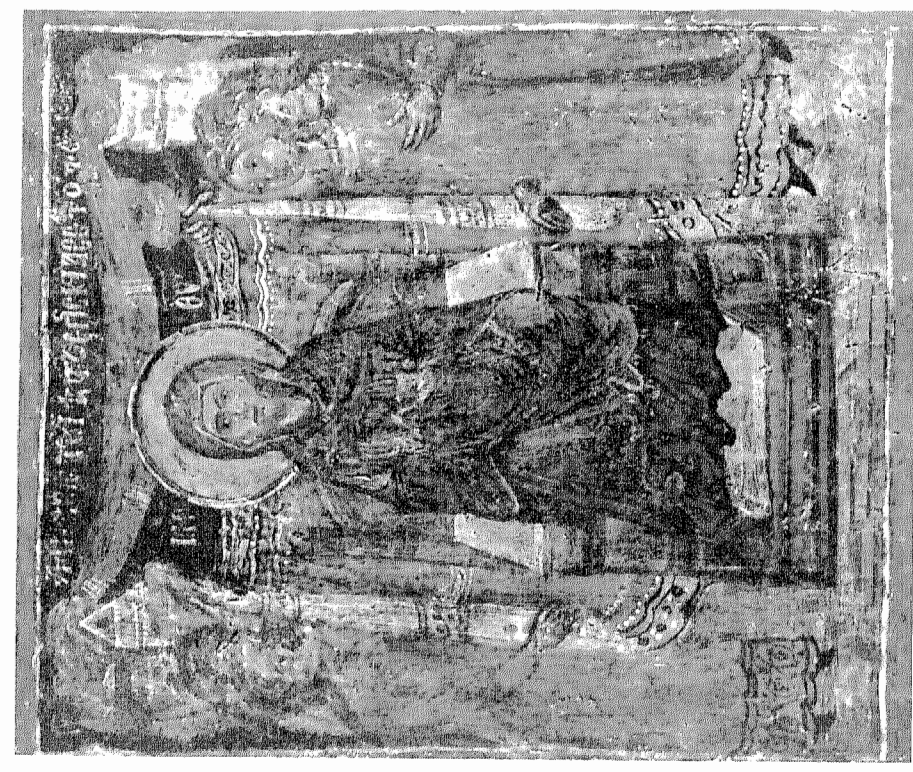
1. Oikos 1, Annunciation at the Well, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



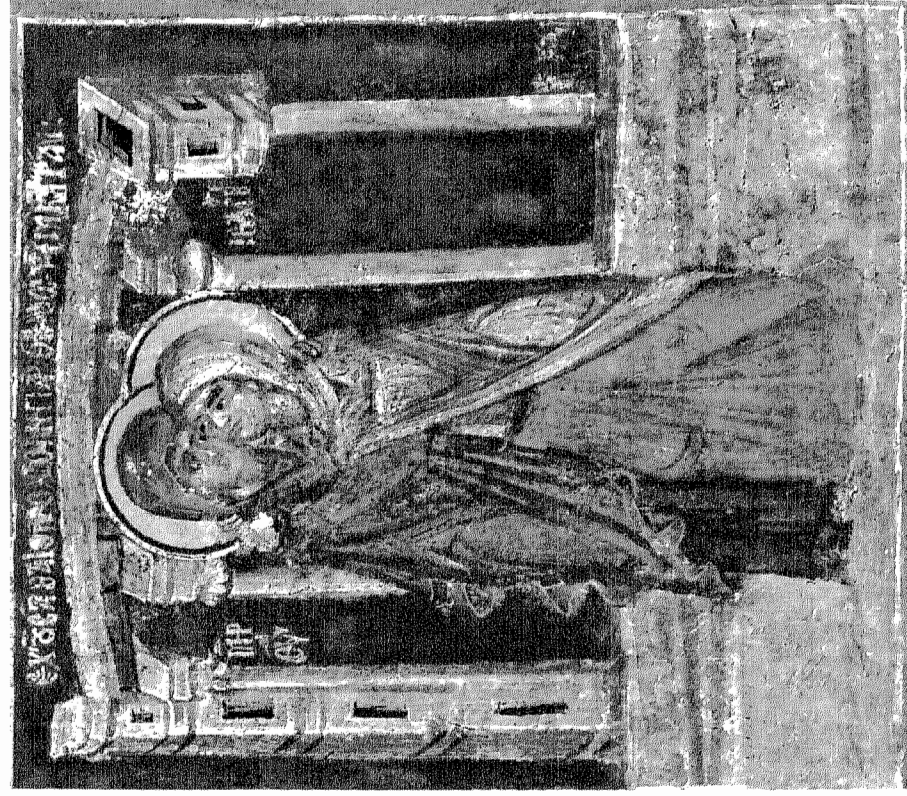
2. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



3. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



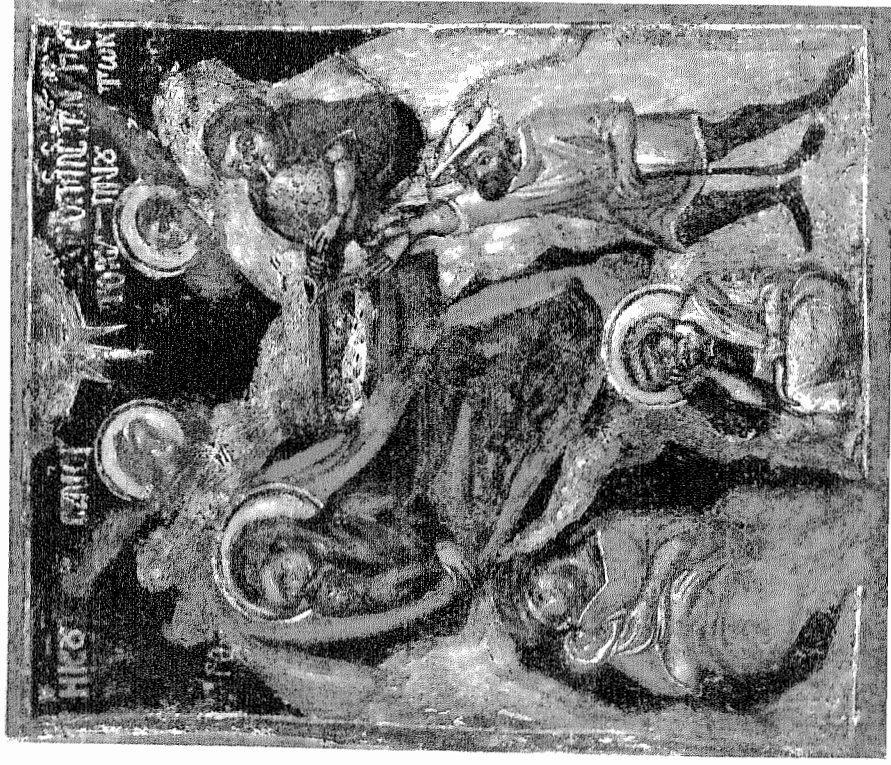
4. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



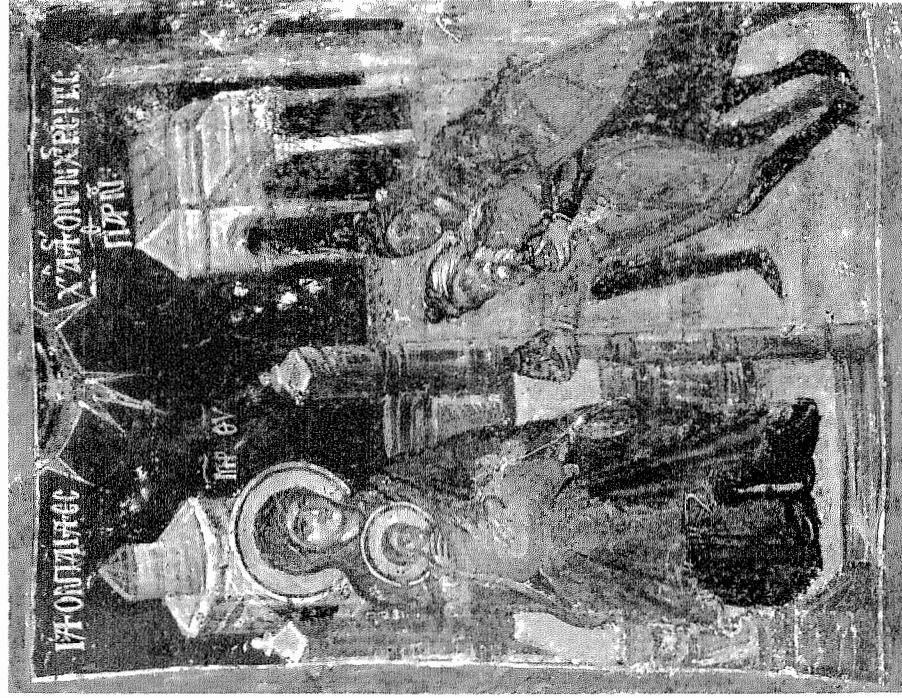
5. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



6. Oikos 6, The Doubt of Joseph, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



7. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



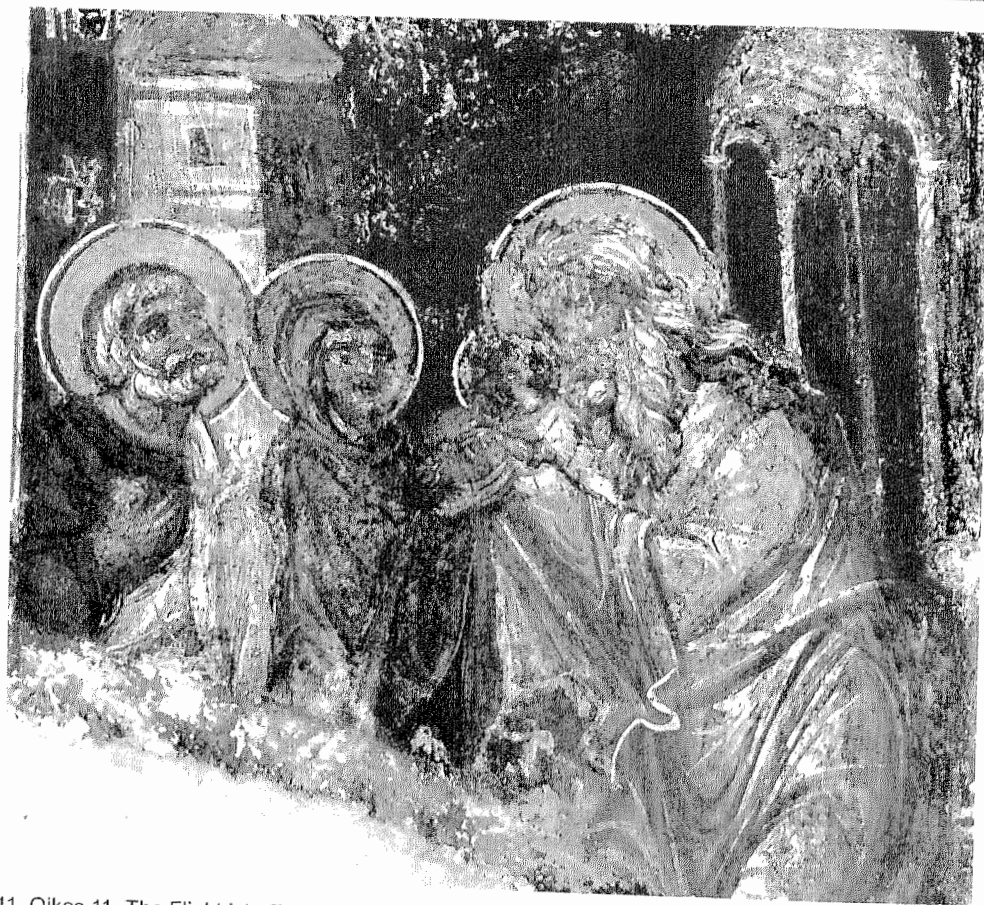
9. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



8. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



10. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



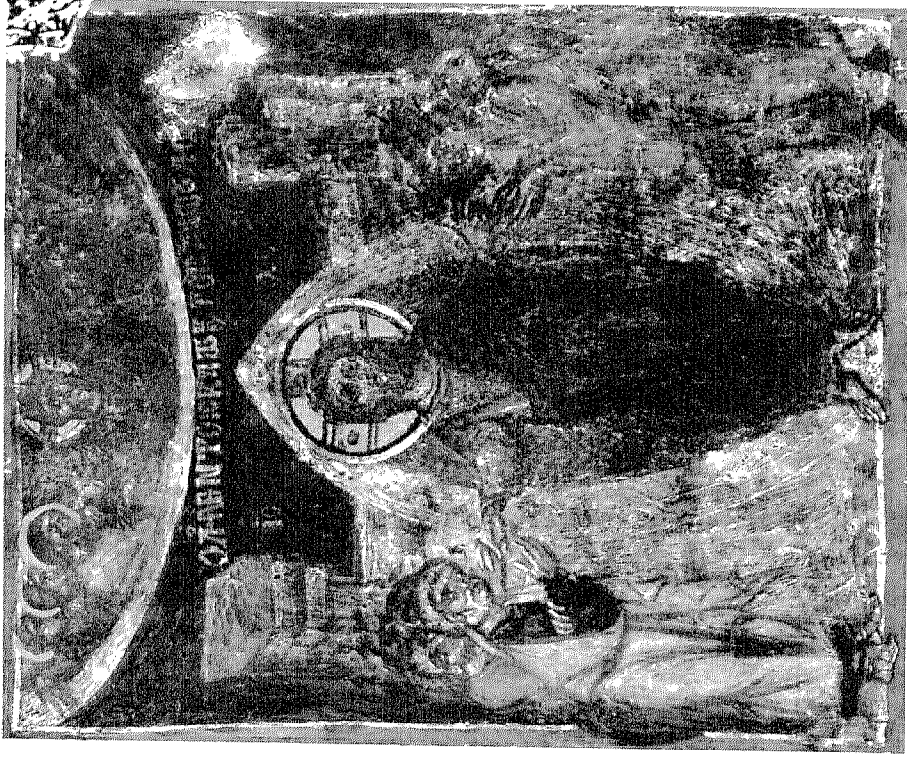
11. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.
 12. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



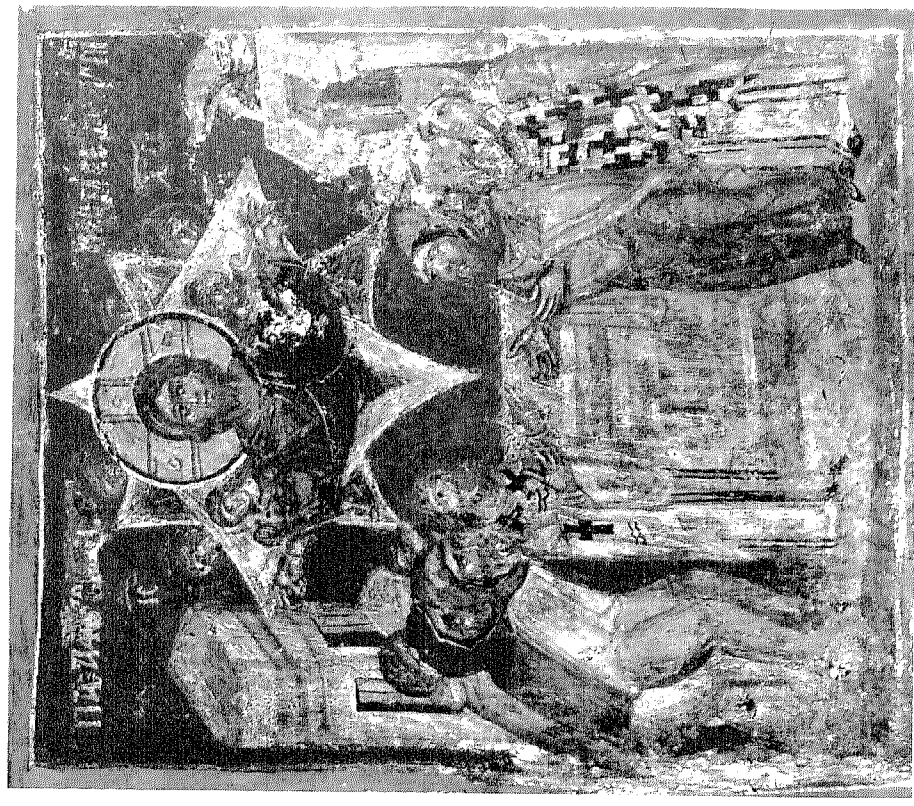
13. Oikos 13, The New Creation, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



14. Oikos 14(16), The Strange Birth (The Astounded Angels), Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



15. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



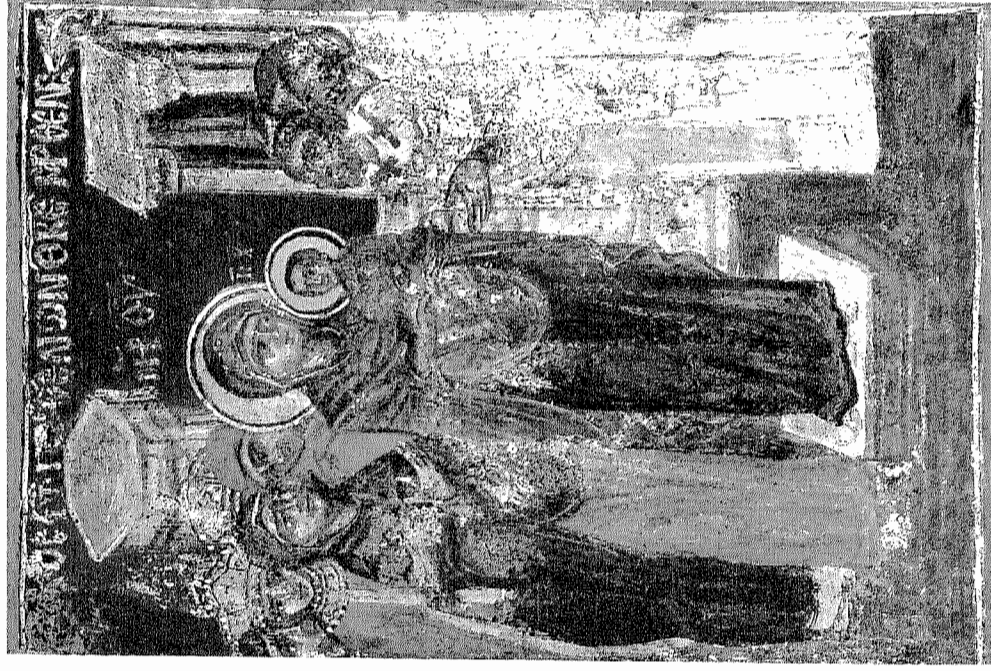
16. Oikos 16(14), The Astounded Angels (The Strange Birth), Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



17. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



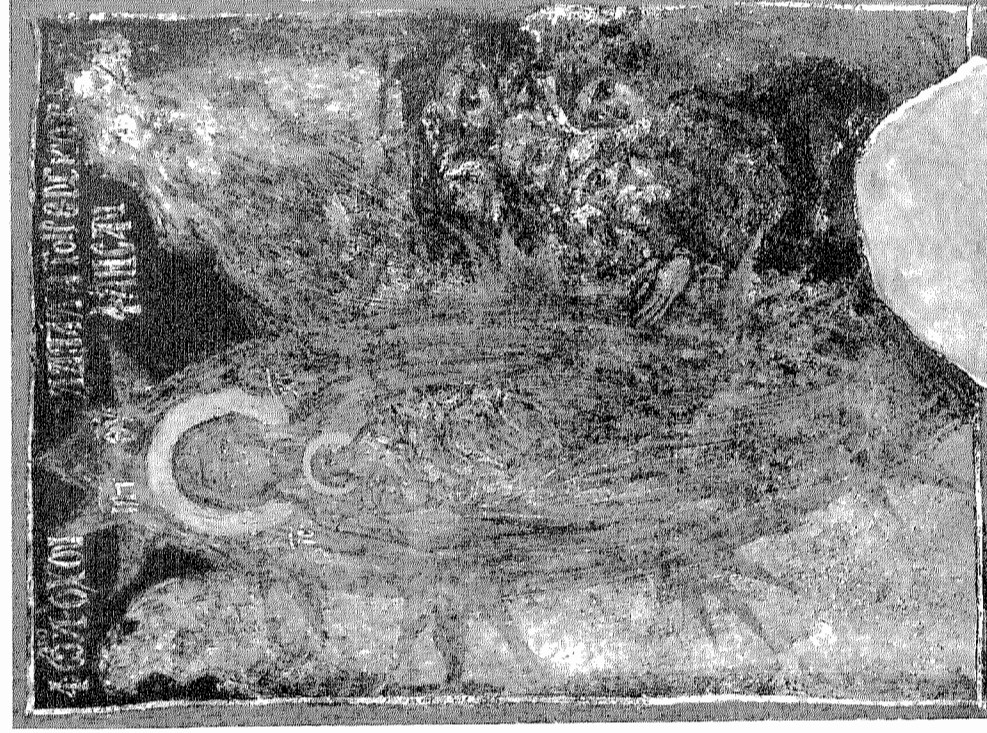
18. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



19. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Roustika, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



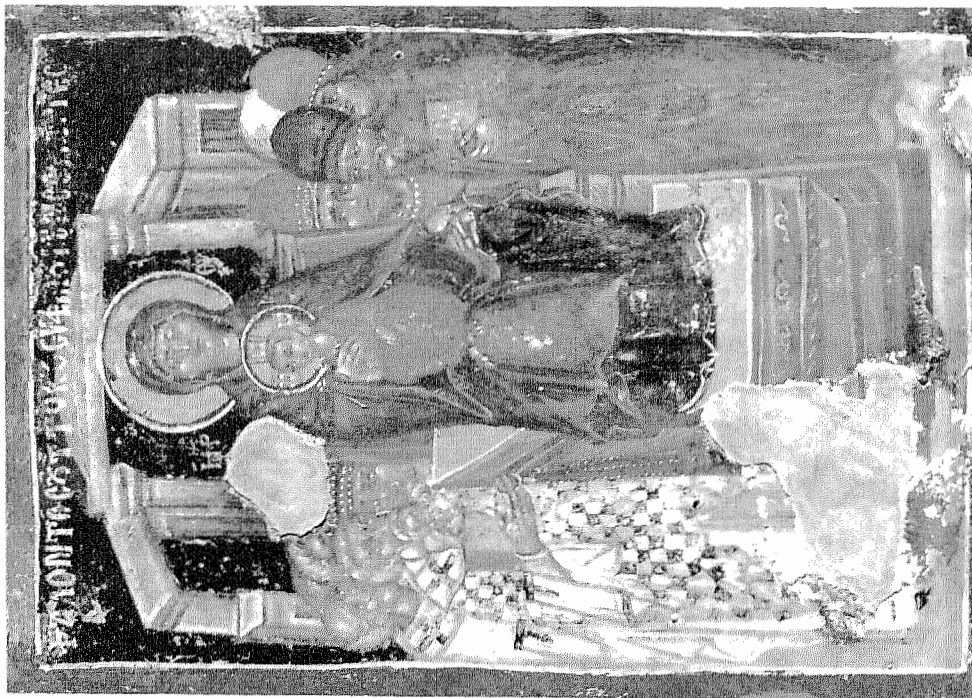
20. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Roustika, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



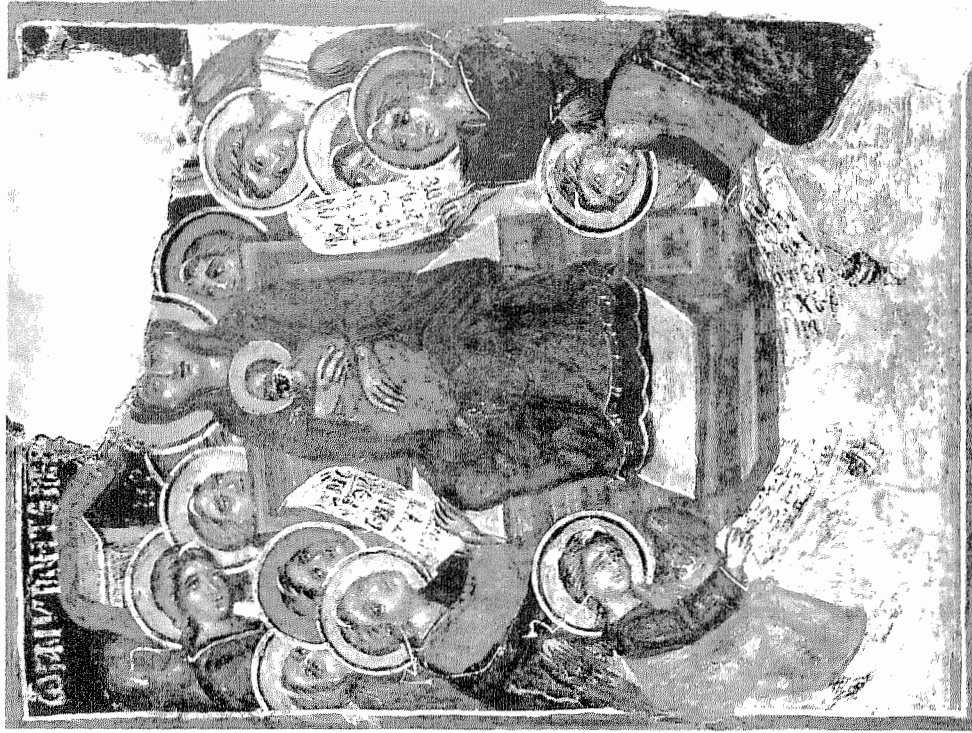
21. Oikos 21, Shining Lamp, Roustika, Crete, Church of the Virgin, 1390-91 A.D.



22. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of Debts, Roustika, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



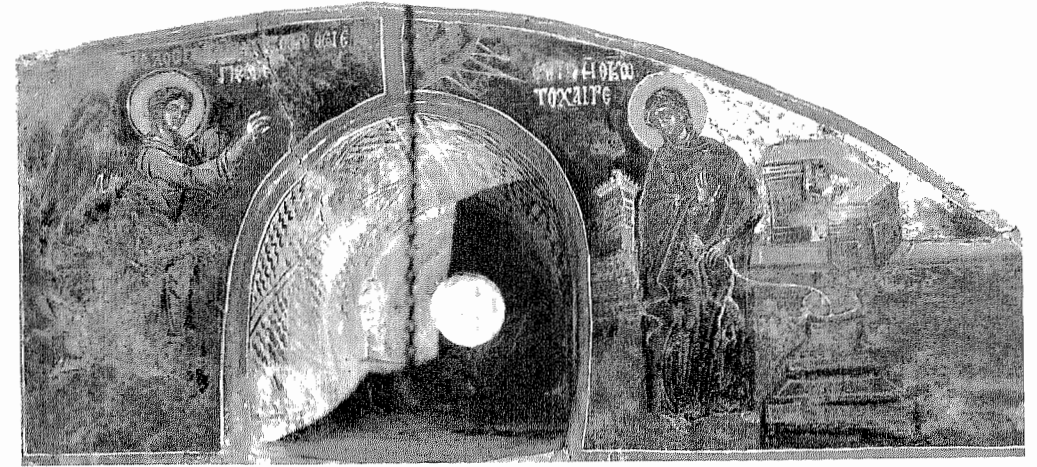
23. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Roustika, Rethymnon, 1390-91



24. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Roustika, Rethymnon, 1390-1391 A.D.



26. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.



25. Oikos 1, Annunciation at the Well, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.



29. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.



27. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.
28. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.

30. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th cent.
31. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beginning of the 15th cent.



32. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of the Panagia, Kavousi, Hierapetra, Crete, beg. 15th cent.



33. Oikos 7, Adoration of the Shepherds, Kavousi



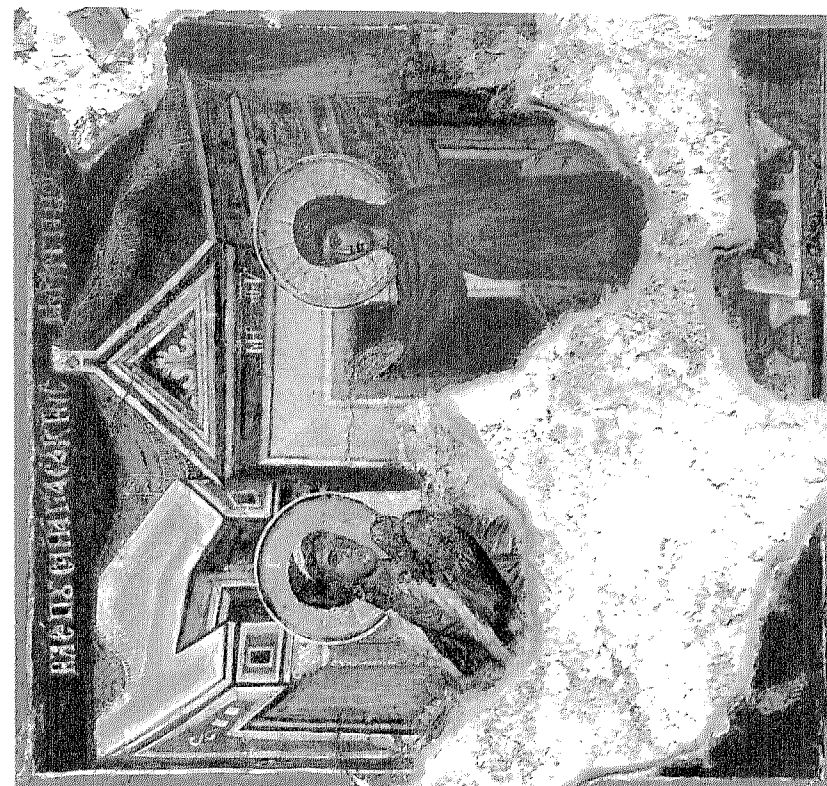
34. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Vori, Crete



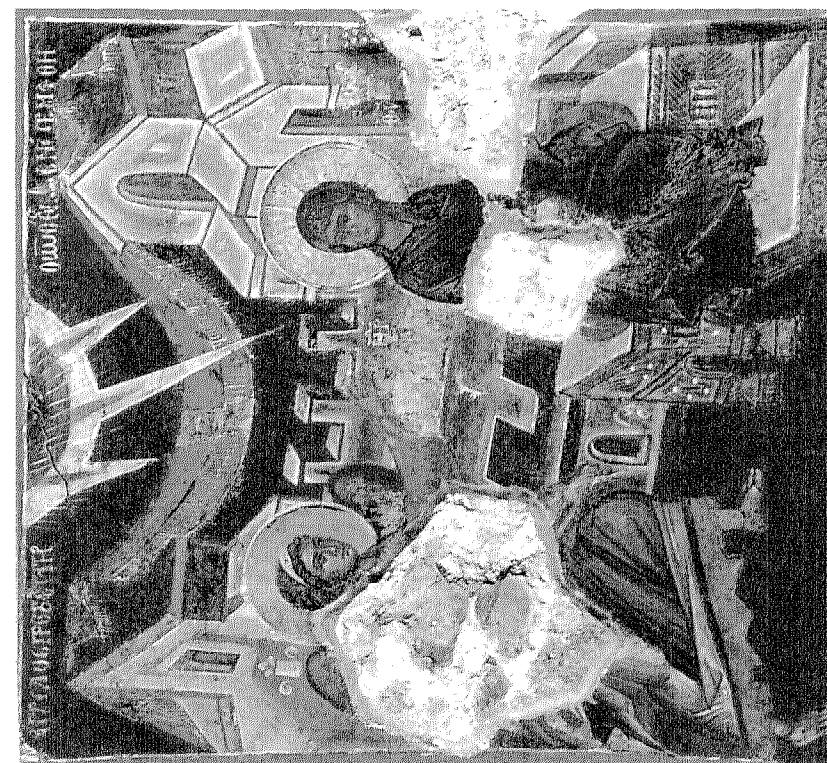
35. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Church of the Panagia, Vori, c. 1400 A.D.



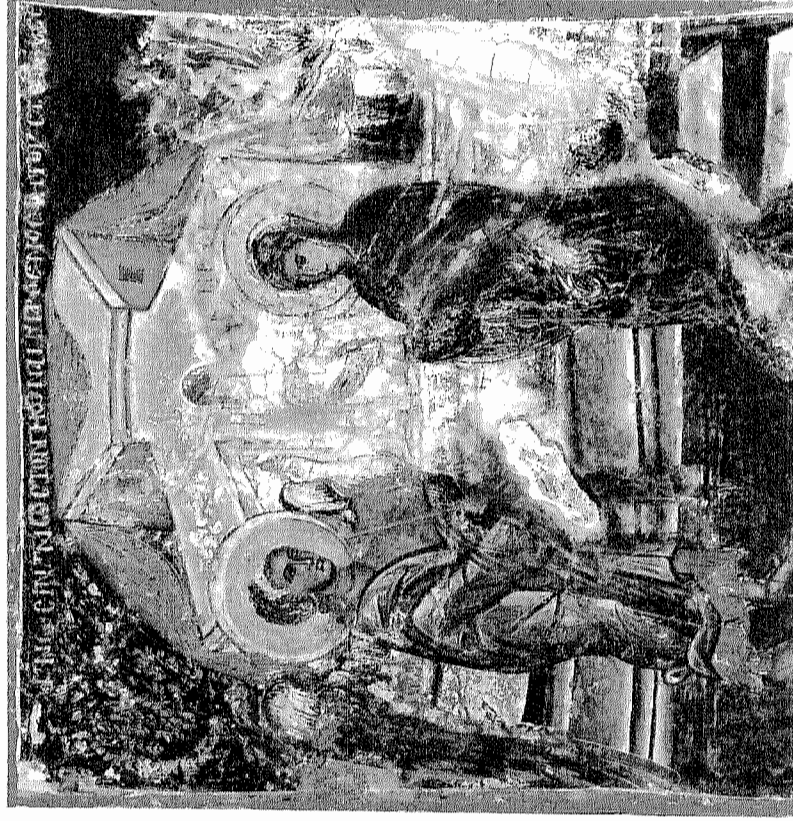
36. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Church of the Panagia, Vori, Pyrgiotissa, Crete, c. 1400



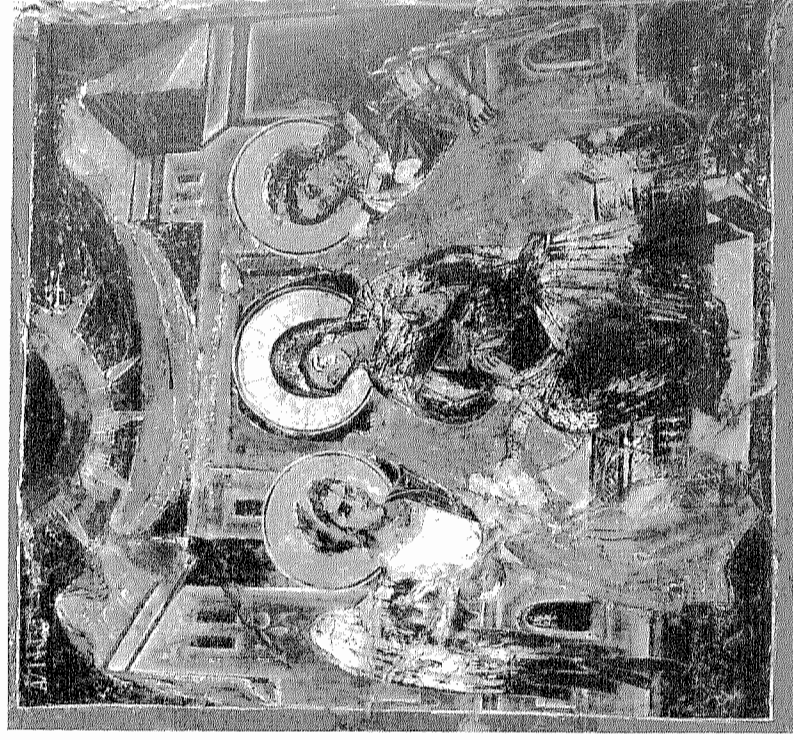
38. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



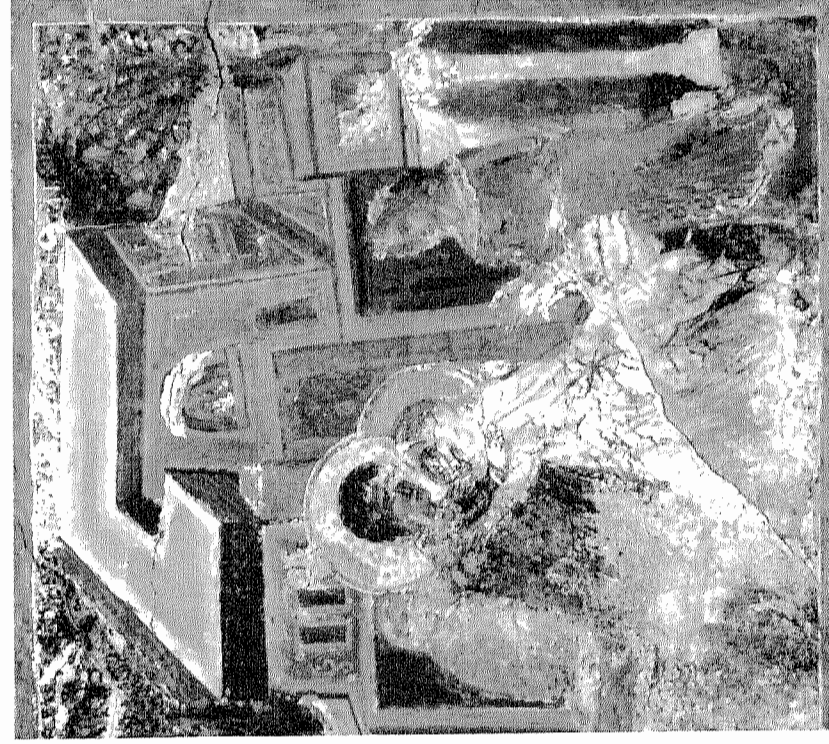
37. Oikos 1, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



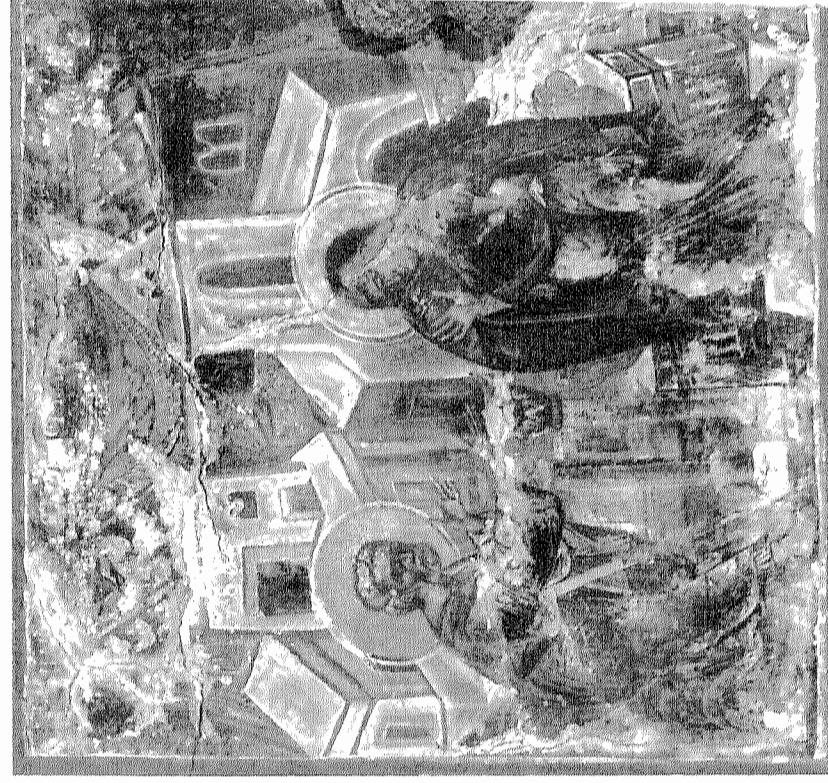
39. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



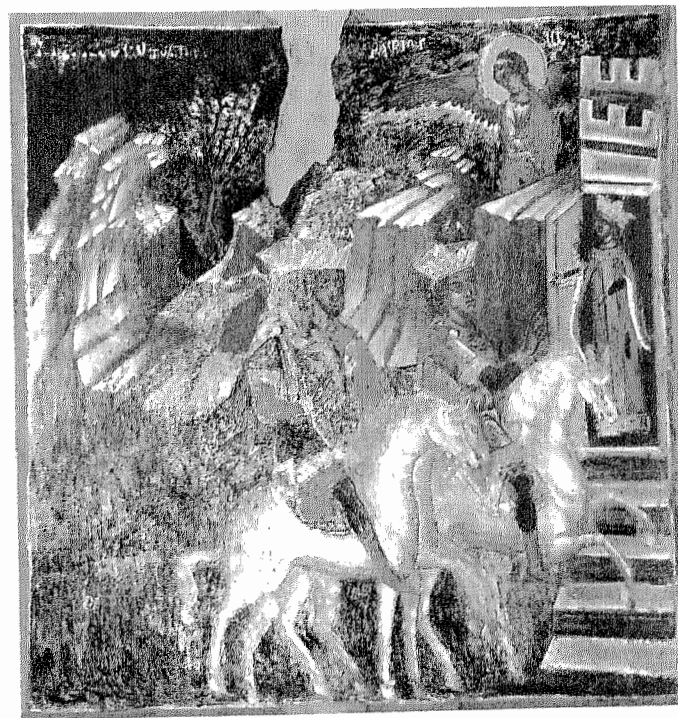
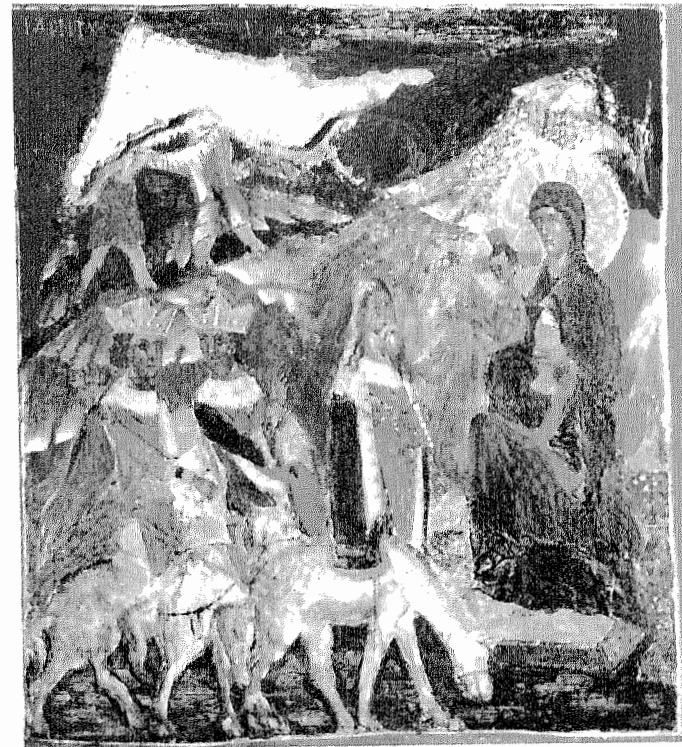
40. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



41. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.

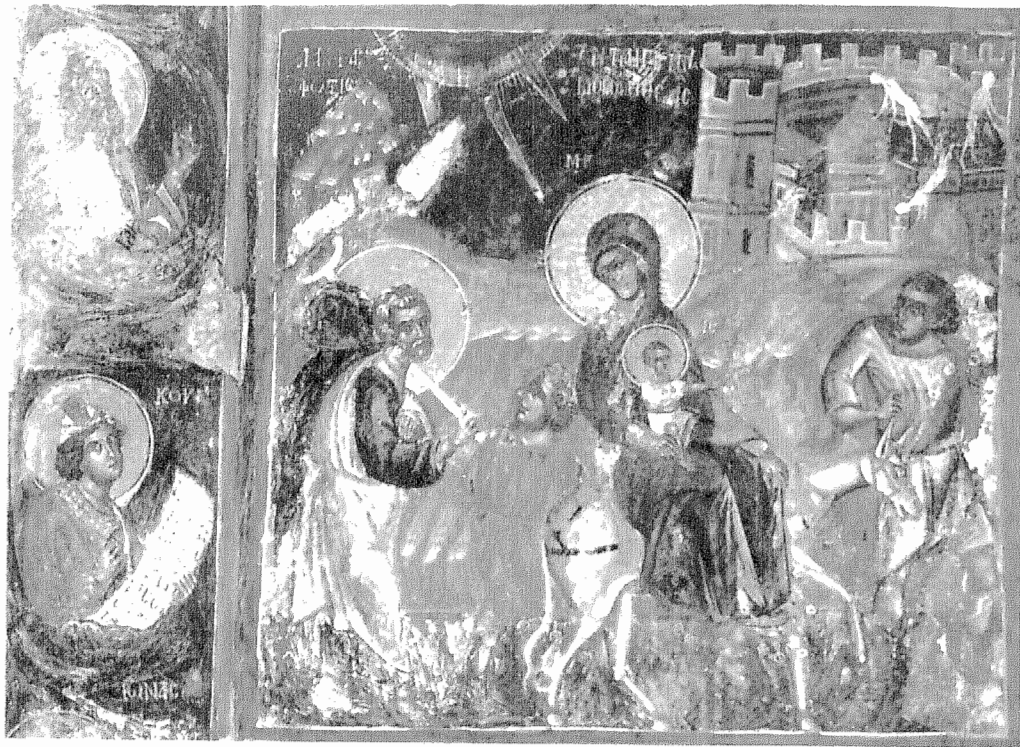


42. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



43. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, St. Phanourios, Valsamonero, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
 44. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.

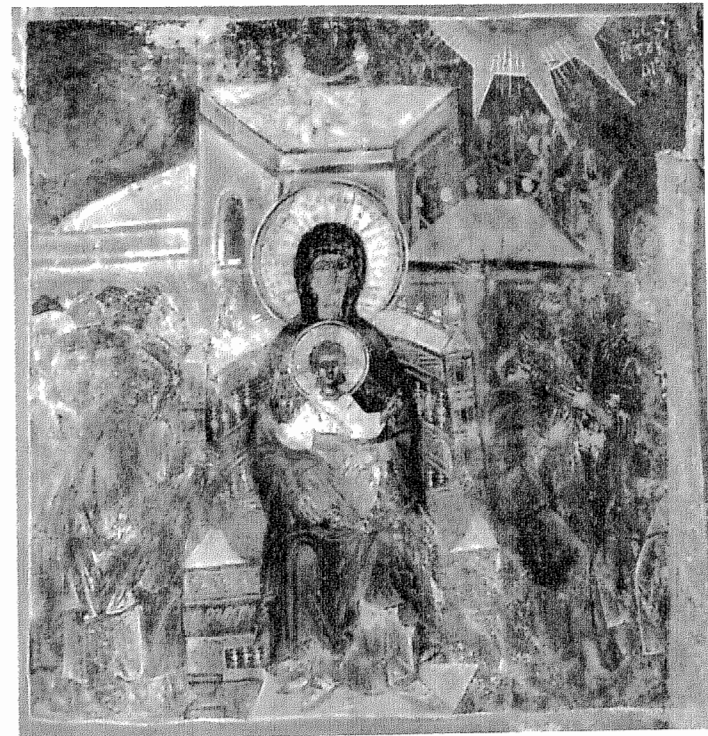
45. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
 46. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, ca. 1430 A.D.

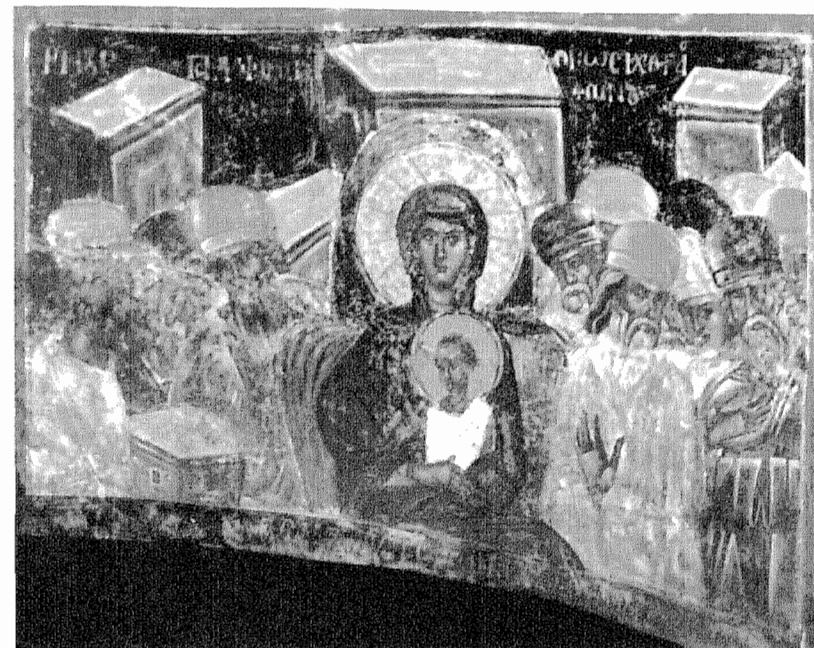
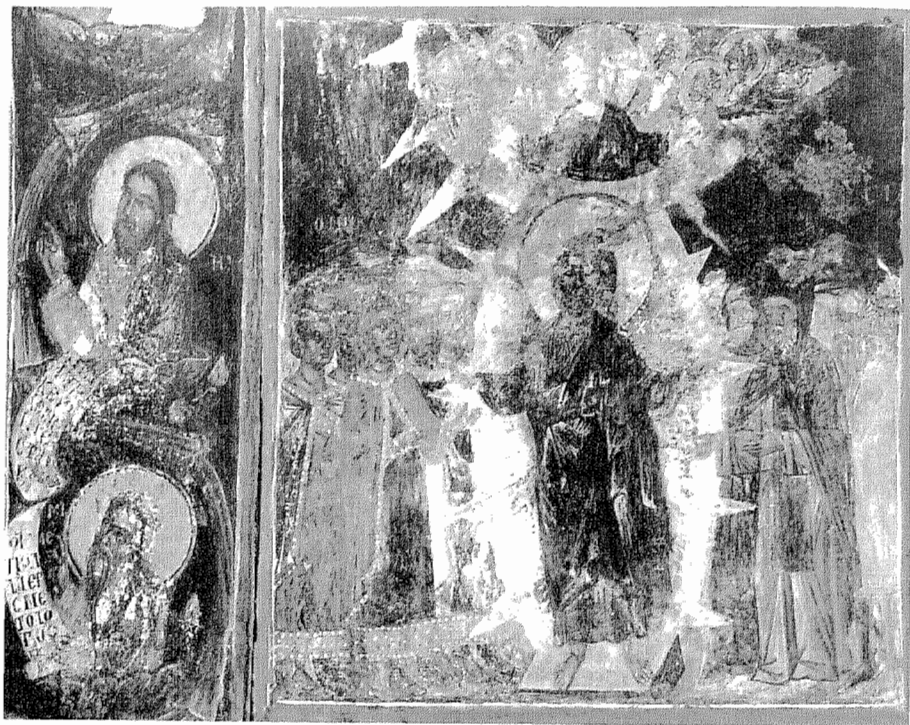


47. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
 48. Oikos 12, Hypapante, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



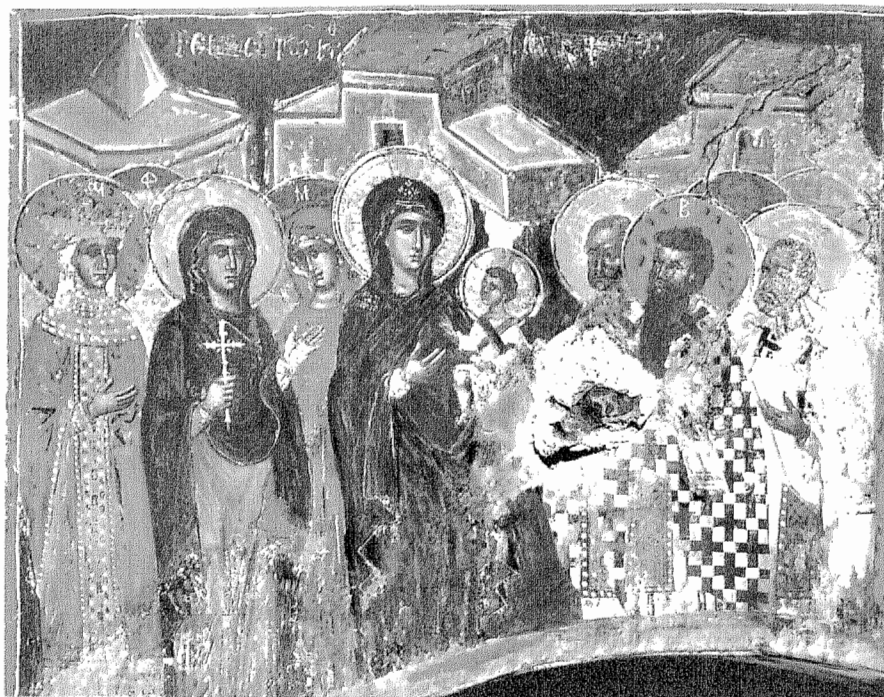
49. Oikos 13(14), The New Creation (The Strange Birth), St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, ca. 1430 A.D.
 50. Oikos 14(13), The Strange Birth (The New Creation), St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, ca. 1430 A.D.



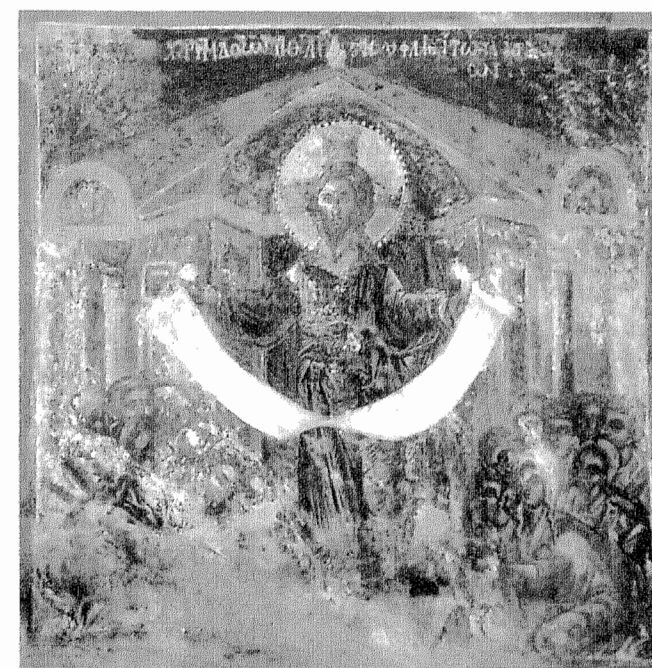


51. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
 52. Oikos 16, The Astounded Angels, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.

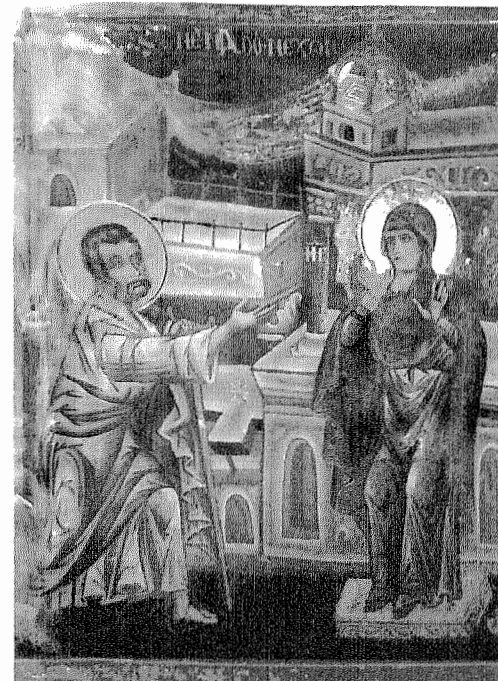
53. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
 54. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete



55. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
 56. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



57. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
 58. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, St. Phanourios, Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



61. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beg. 14th c.

62. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beg. 14th c.



59. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.
60. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, St. Phanourios, Valsamonero, Vorizia, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



63. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century



64. Oikos 13(4). The New Creation (The Conception of Christ), Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century



65. The Virgin Cheirophilousa, detail of Fig. 64, Oikos 13(4), Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beg. of 14th c.



66. Oikos 14, The Strange Birth, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century



67. The sponsor Gregorios the priest, detail of Fig. 66, Oikos 14, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beg. of 14th c.



68. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion



69. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete



72. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



73. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



70. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, detail, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



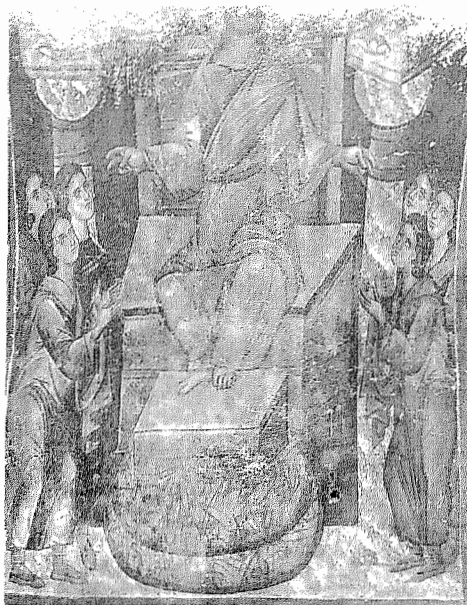
71. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



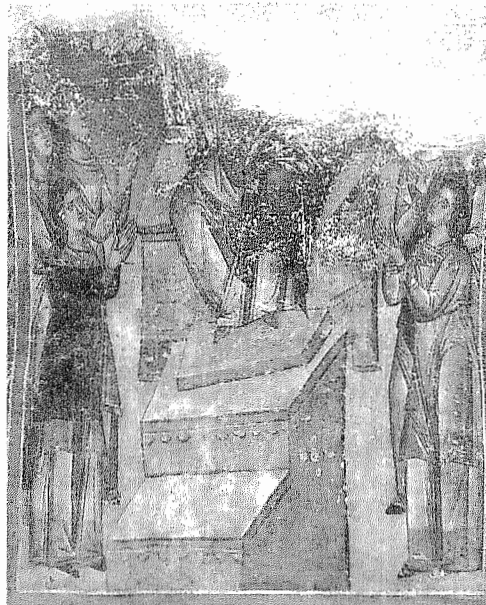
74. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, detail, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



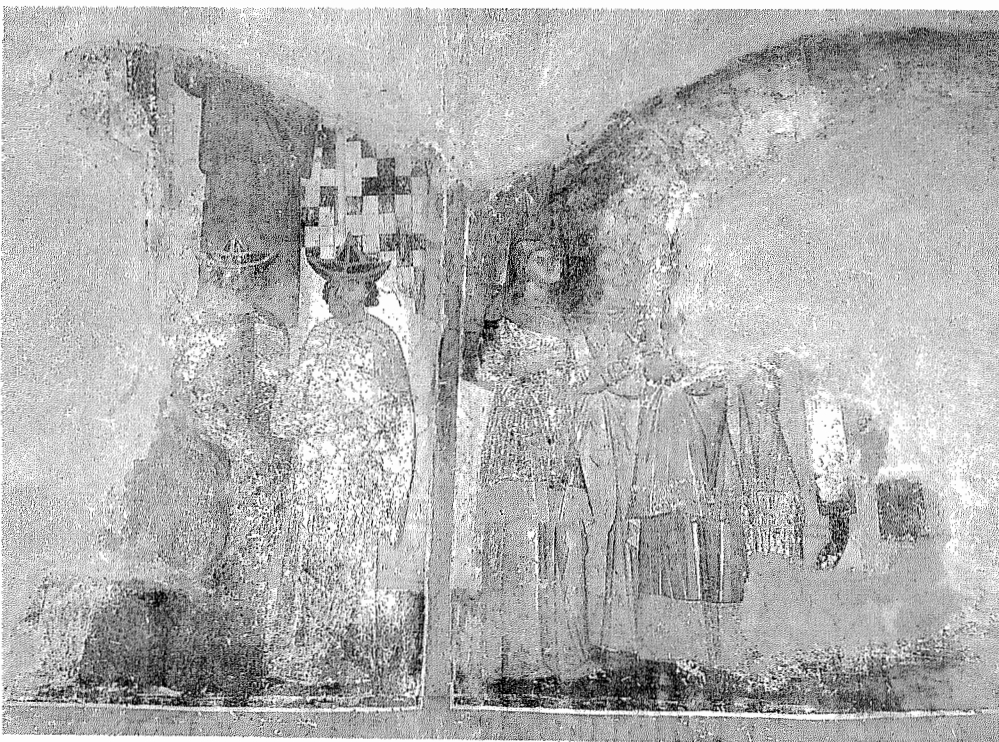
75. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, detail, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



76. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



77. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



78. Oikoi 23-24, Singing Your Giving Birth and the Offering of the Hymn, Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson, variously dated between ca. 1296 and ca. 1345 A.D.



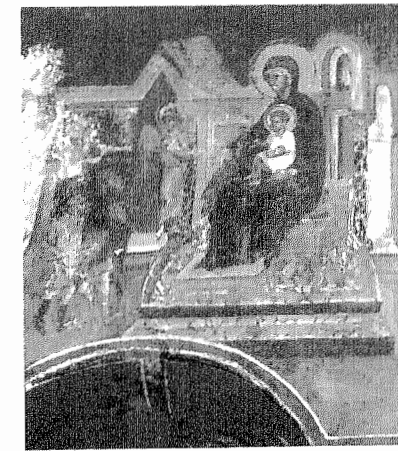
79. Oikoi 5-6, The Visitation and the Doubts of Joseph, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



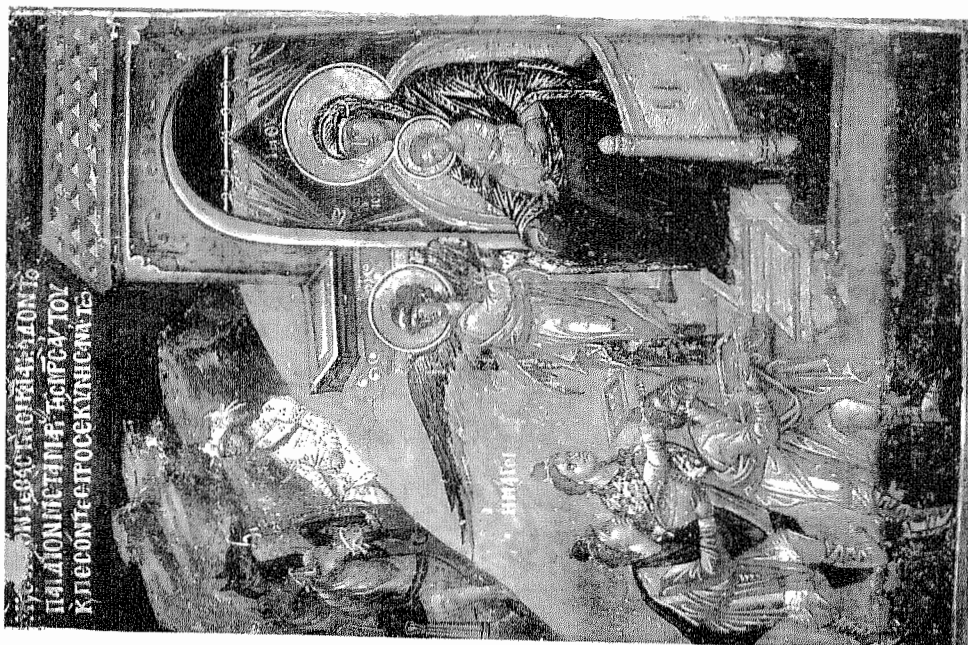
80. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



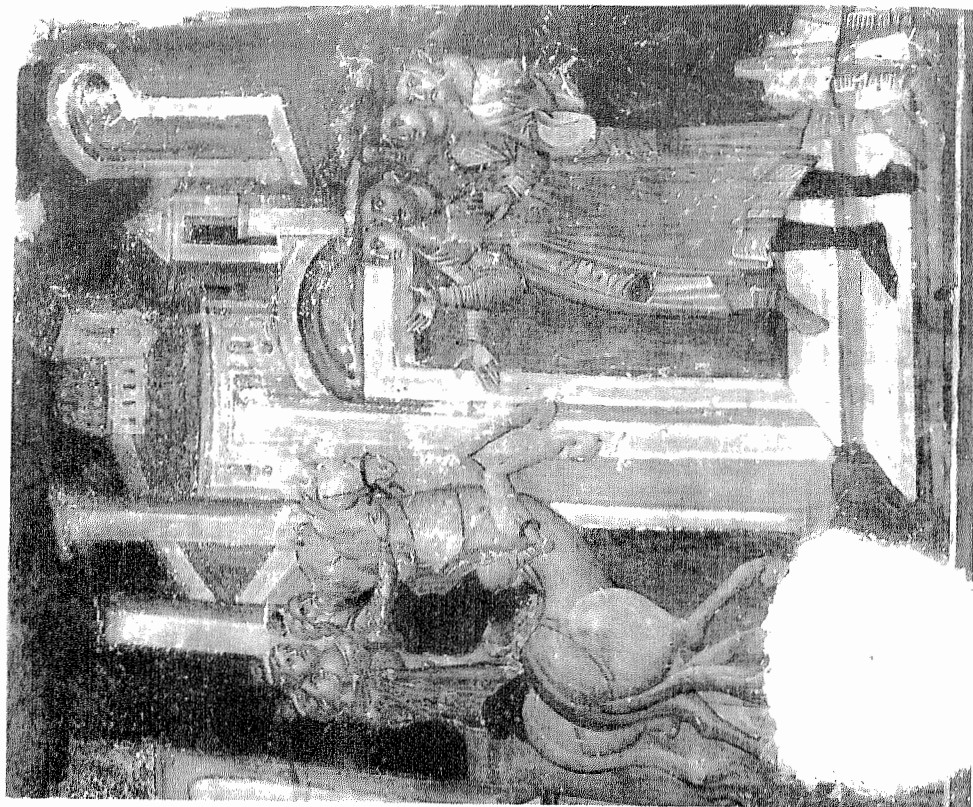
81. Oikos 8, Journey of the Magi, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



82. Oikos 9, Adoration of the Magi, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



83. The Adoration of the Magi from the Christological cycle, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



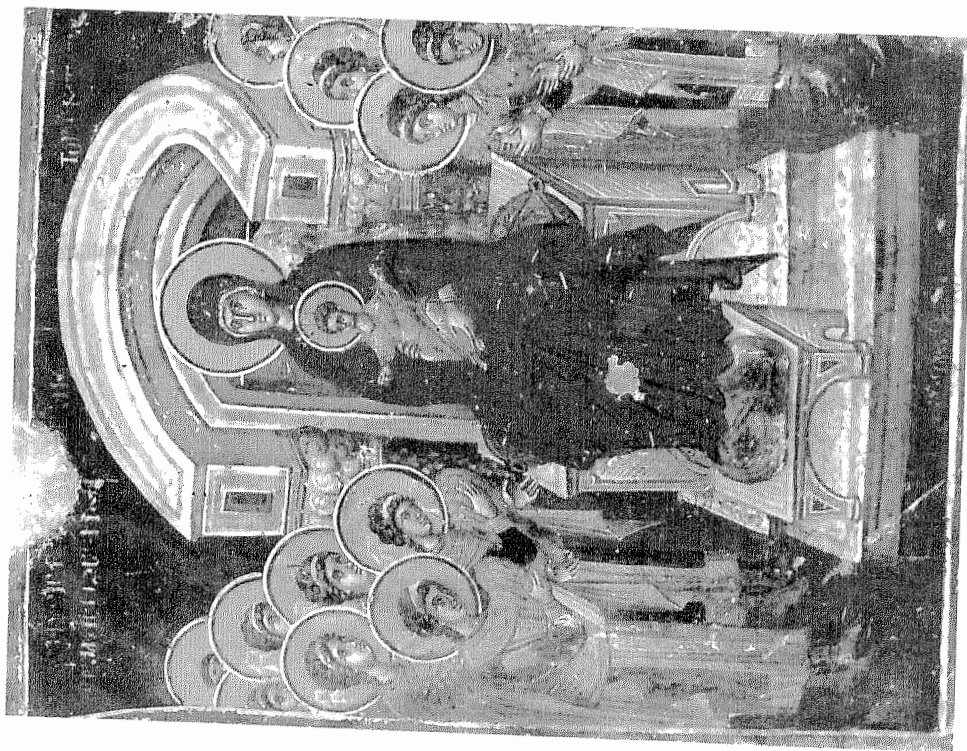
84. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



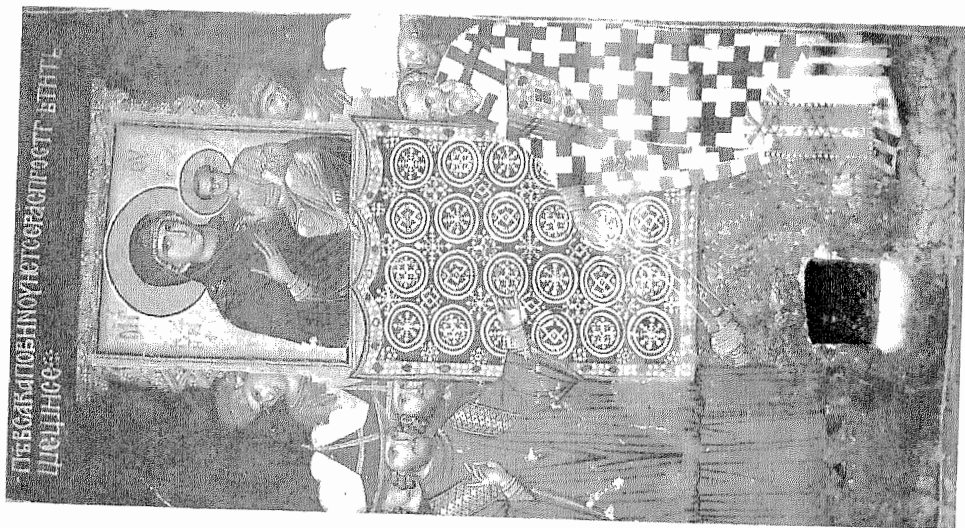
86. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



85. Oikos 14, The Strange Birth, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



87. Oikos 16, The Astonished Angels, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



88. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



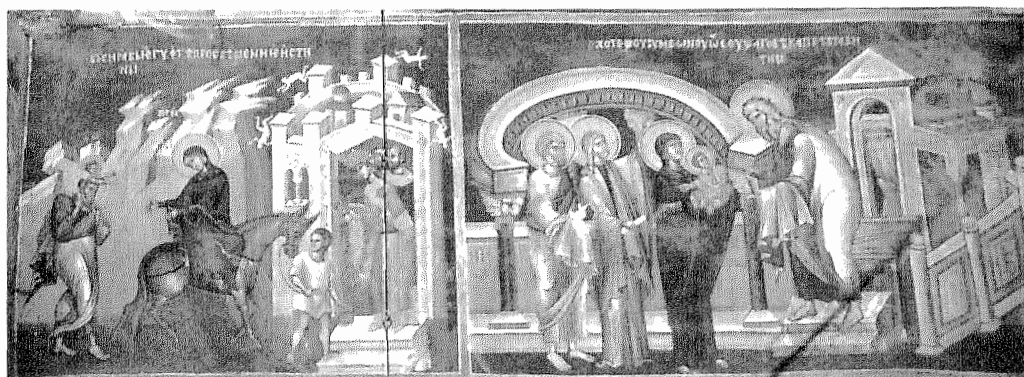
89. Stanzas 2, 8-9 and 11-12, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



90. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



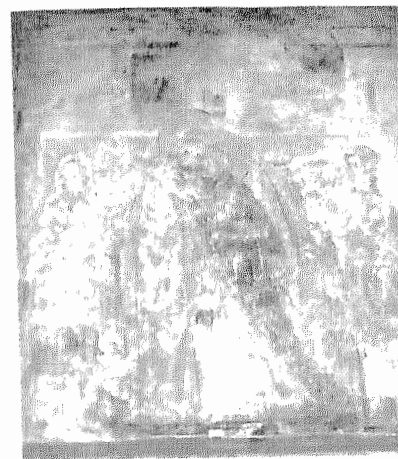
91. Stanzas 8-9, The Journey of the Magi and the Adoration of the Magi, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



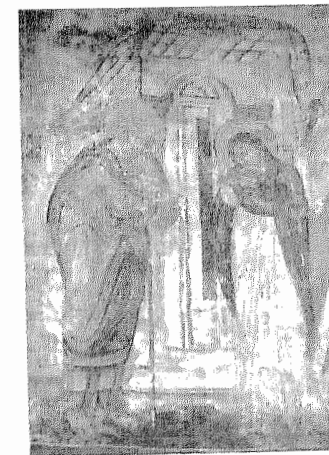
92. Stanzas 11-12, The Flight into Egypt and Hypapante, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



93. Stanzas 1-4, Three Annunciation scenes and the Conception of Christ, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



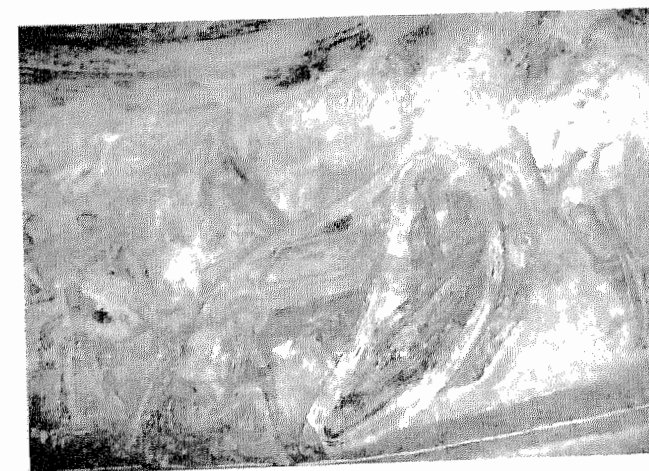
94. Stanza 5, Visitation, Matejce, 1356-60 A.D.



95. Stanza 6, Doubts of Joseph, Matejce



96. Stanza 7, The shepherds heard the angels singing, Matejce



97. Stanza 8, Journey of the Magi, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



98. Stanza 9, Adoration of the Magi, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



99. Stanza 10, Return of the Magi to Babylon, Matejce, 1356-60



100. Stanza 11, Flight into Egypt, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



101. Stanza 12, Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Matejce



103. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



102. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



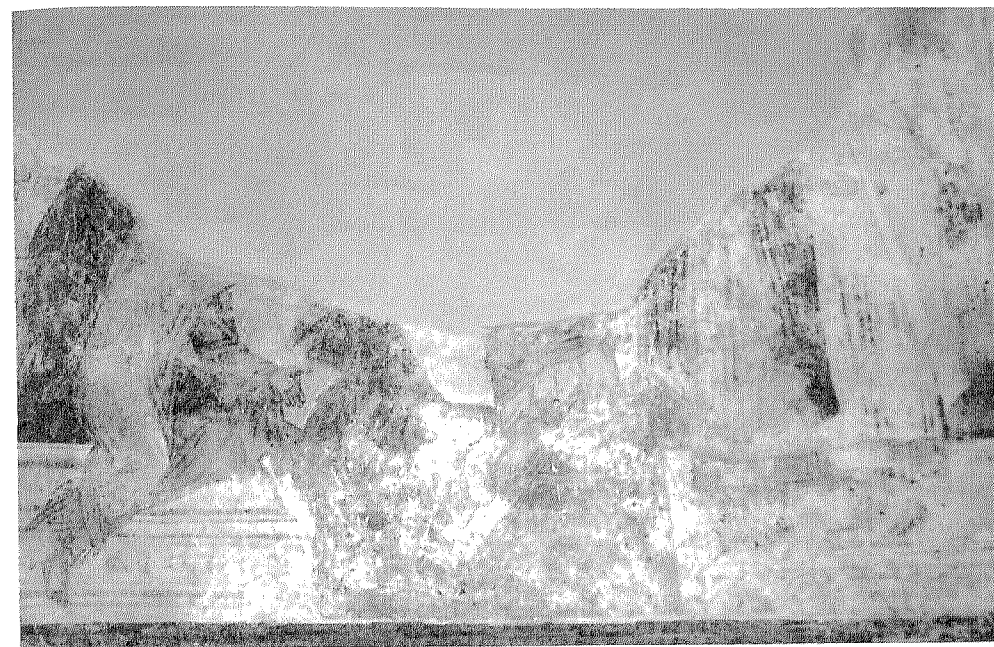
104. Stanza 14, Strange Birth - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



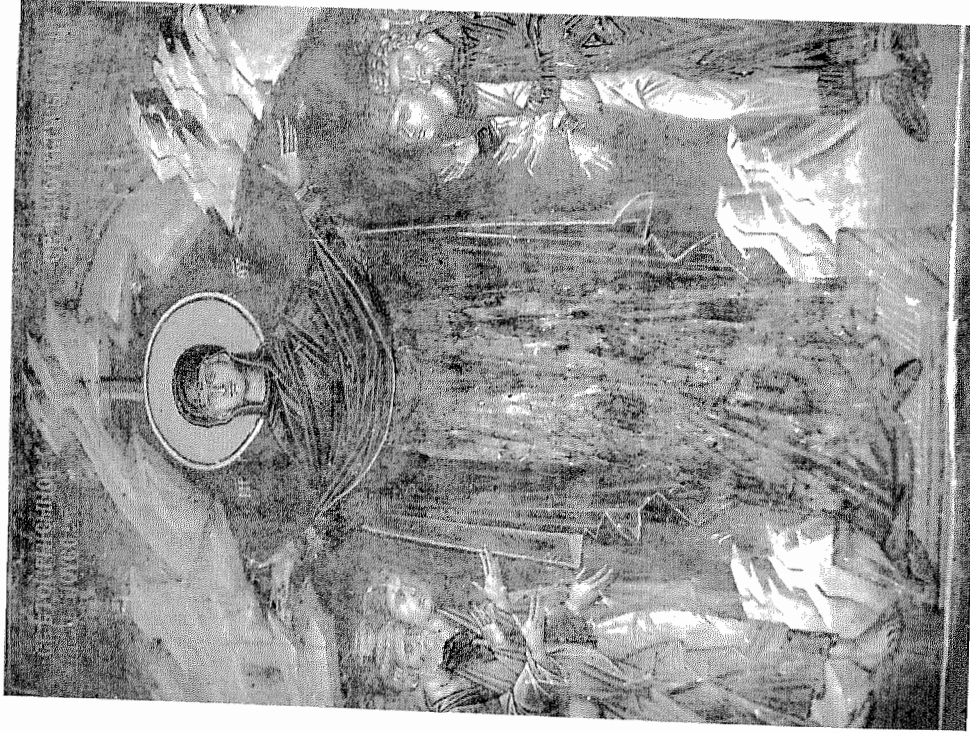
105. Stanza 16, The Astounded Angels, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



107. Stanzas 19-20, The Defence of Virgins and the Defeated Hymns, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



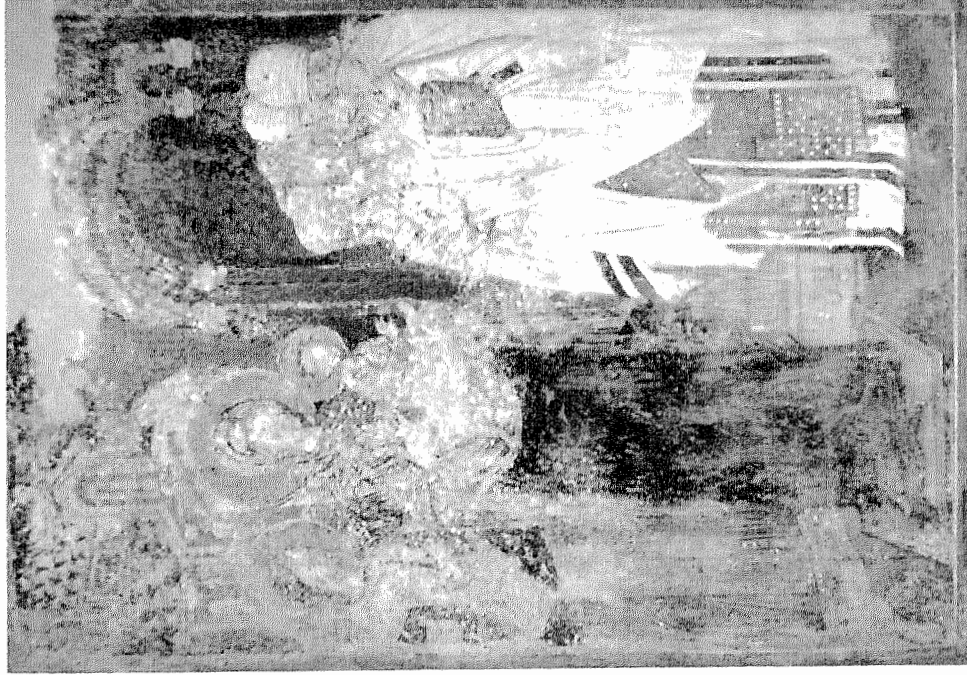
106. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



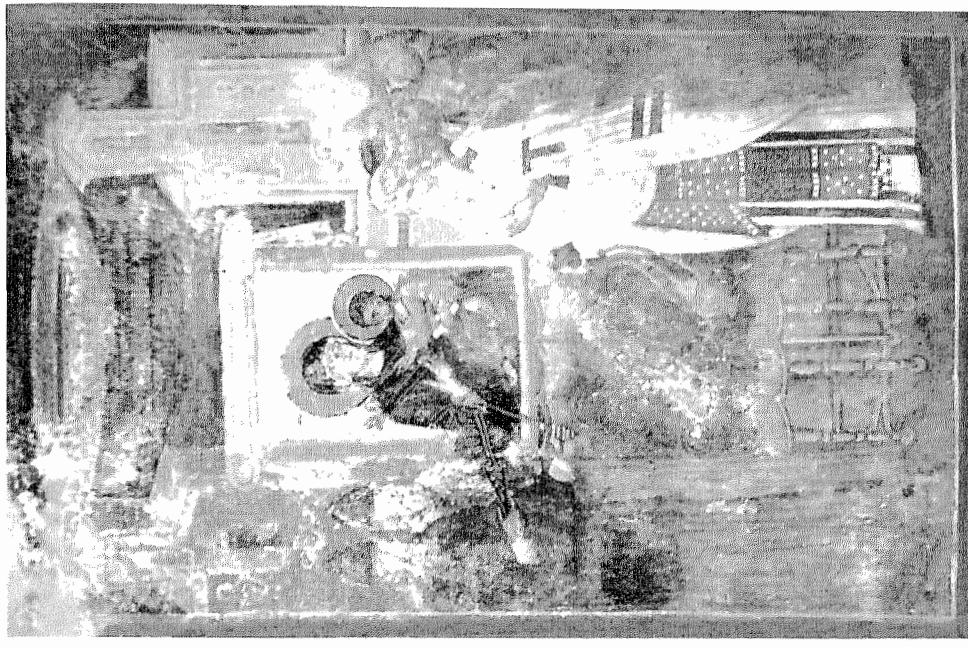
108. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



109. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



110. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



111. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



112. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



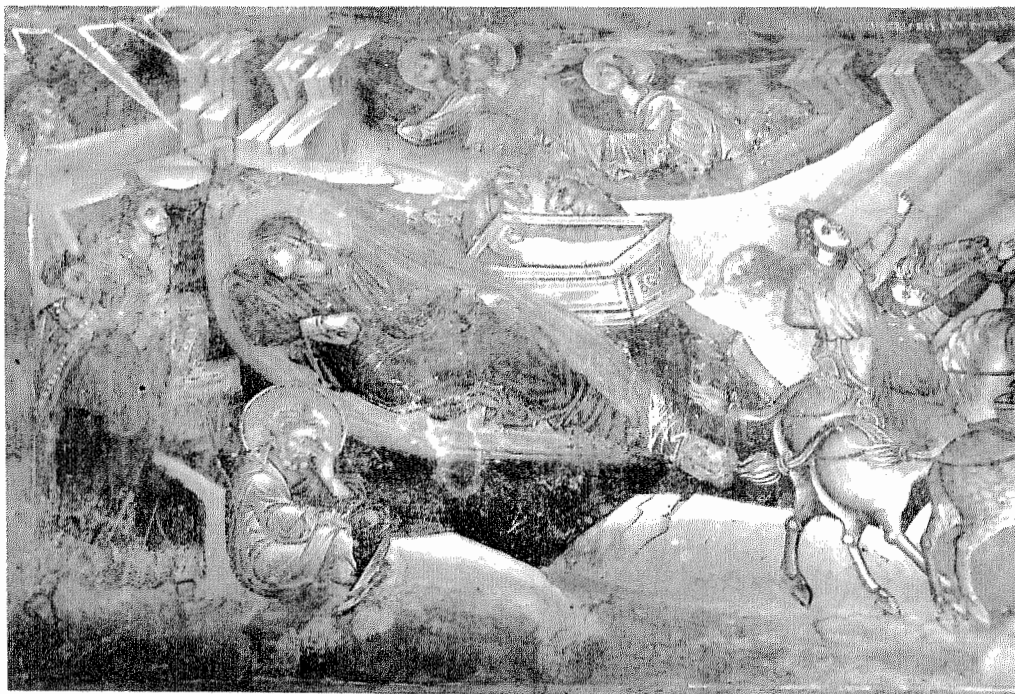
115. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



113. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



114. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



116. Stanzas 5-6, The Visitation and the Doubts of Joseph, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381
 117. Stanza 7, The Nativity, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.A.D.

118. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
 119. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



120. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



122. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



121. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



123. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



126. Stanza 16, The Astounded Angels, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



127. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.

124. Stanza 14, The Strange Birth, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.
125. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



128. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World - Anastasis, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



130. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



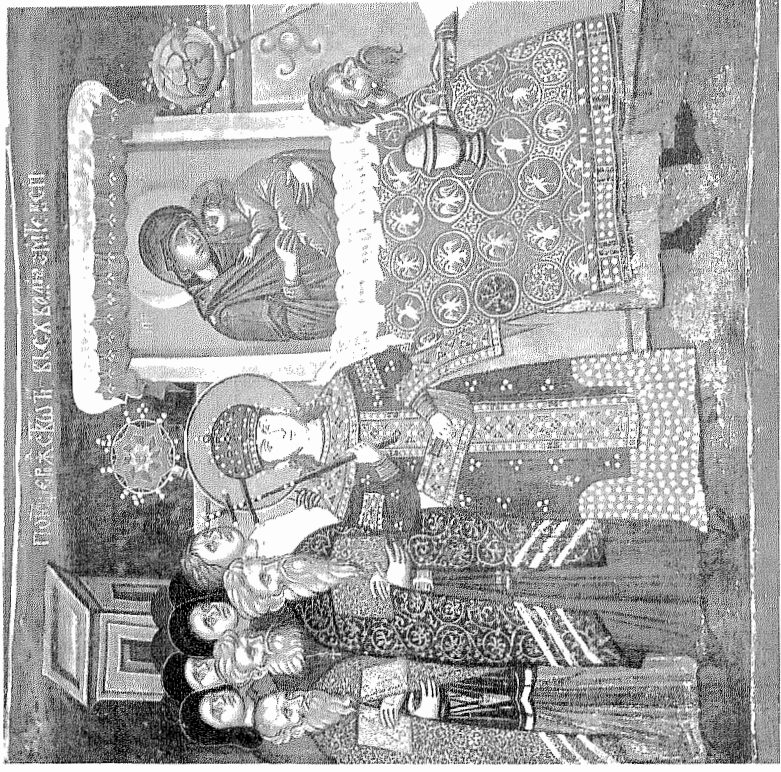
129. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



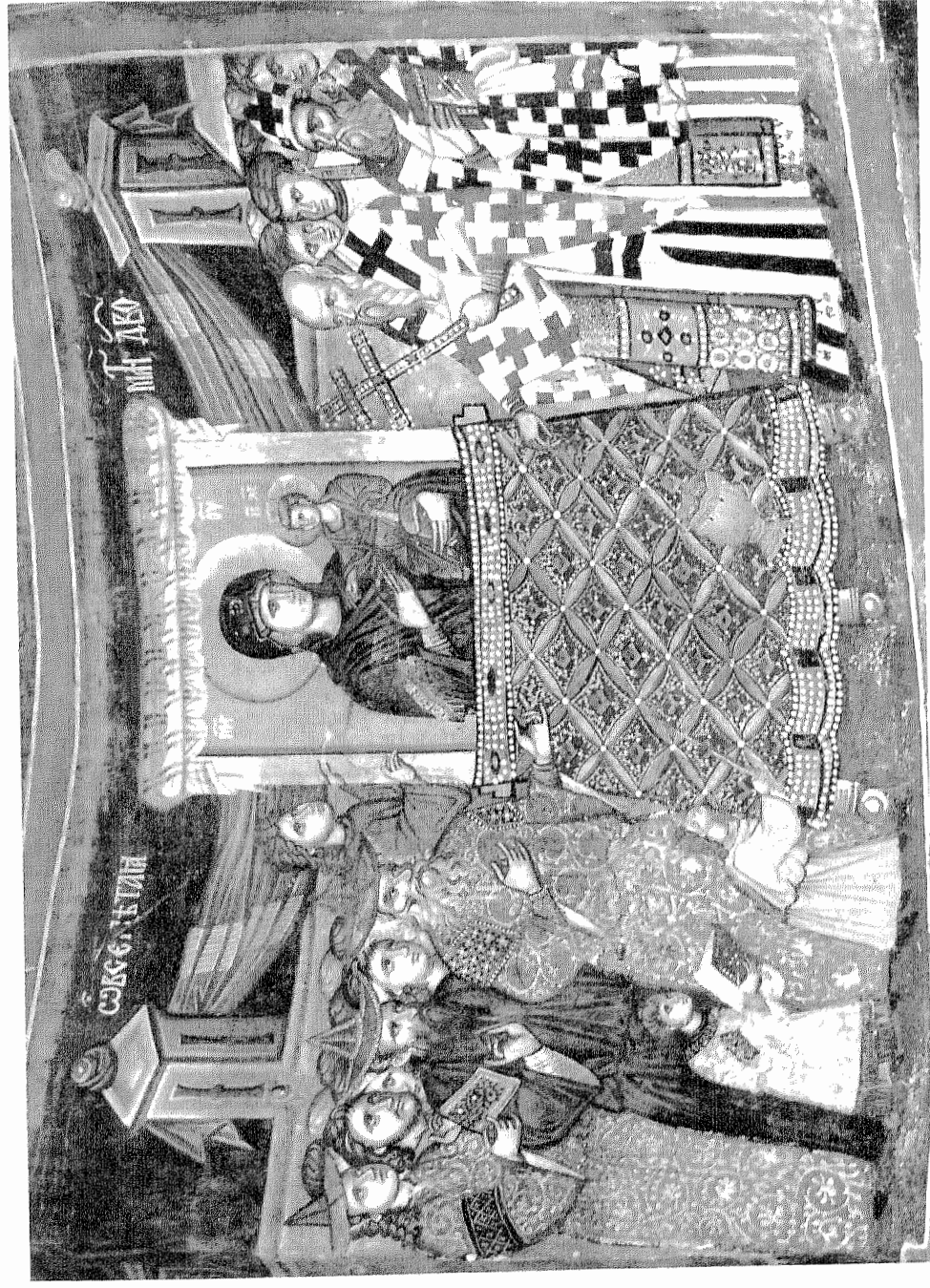
131. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



132. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



133. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth - Liturgical Procession, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



134. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



135. Stanzas 1-2, Two Annunciation Scenes, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



136. Stanzas 3-4, Annunciation and the Conception of Christ, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



137. Stanzas 5-6, The Visitation and the Doubts of Joseph, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



138. Stanzas 7-8, Nativity (the Adoration of the Shepherds) and the Journey of the Magi, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



139. Stanzas 9-10, The Adoration of the Magi and the Return of the Magi to Babylon, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



141. Stanzas 13-14, The New Creation and the Strange Birth, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



140. Stanzas 11-12, The Flight into Egypt and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



142. Stanzas 15-16, The Double Nature of Christ and the Astounded Angels, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



143. Stanzas 17-18, The Voiceless Orators and the Salvation of the World, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



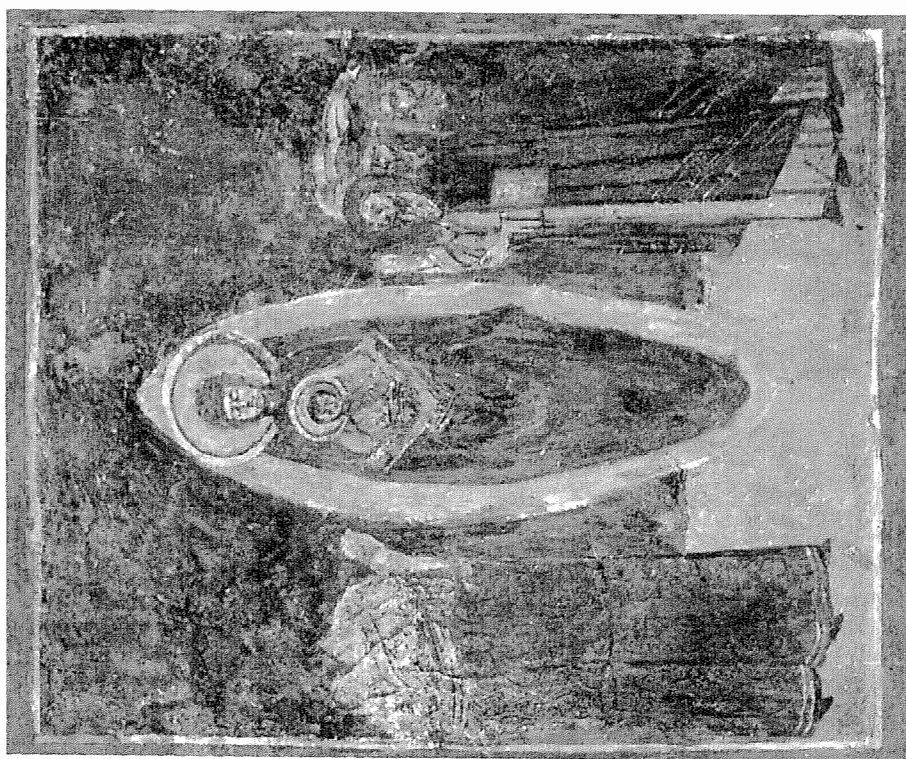
145. Stanzas 21-22, The Shining Lamp and the Cancellation of the Old Debts, Cozia, ca. 1390 A.D.



144. Stanzas 19-20, The Defence of Virgins and the Defeated Hymns, Valachia, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



146. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin, Cozia, ca. 1390 A.D.



147. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



148. Oikos 1, Annunciation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



153. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



151. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



149. Oikos 2, Annunciation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



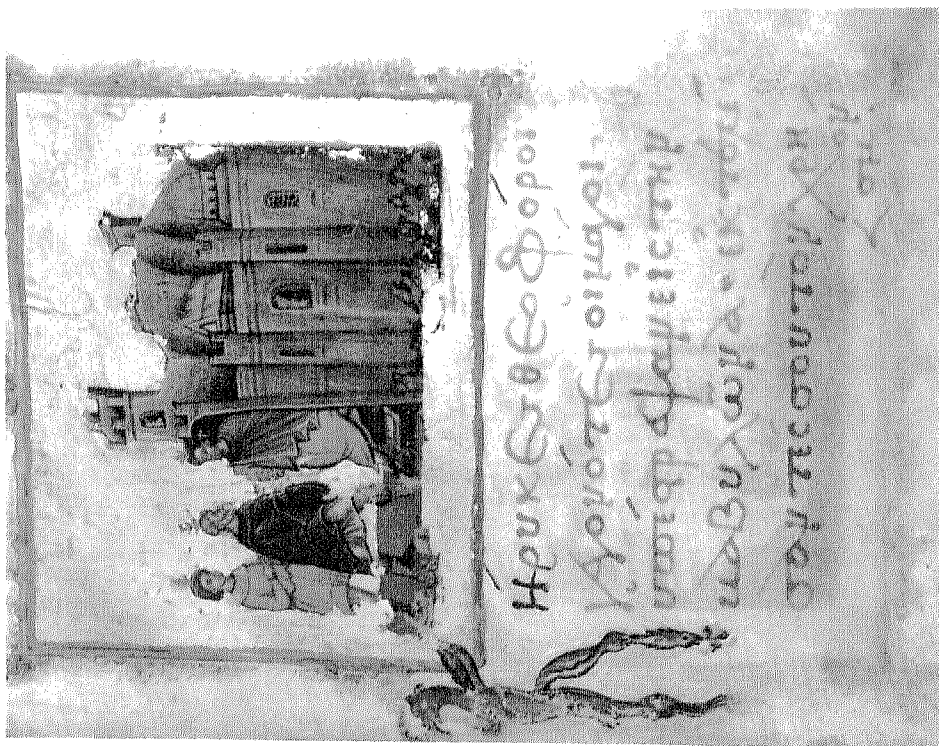
154. Oikos 7, Nativity - The shepherds heard the angels singing, MS. Synodal gr. 429



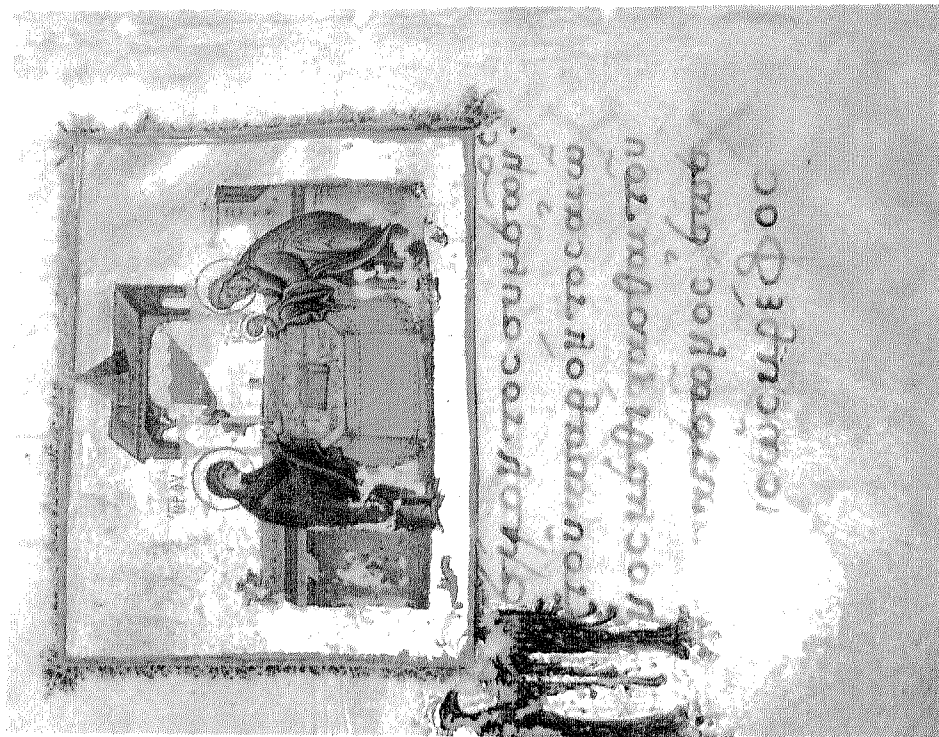
152. Oikos 5, The Visitation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



150. Oikos 3, Annunciation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



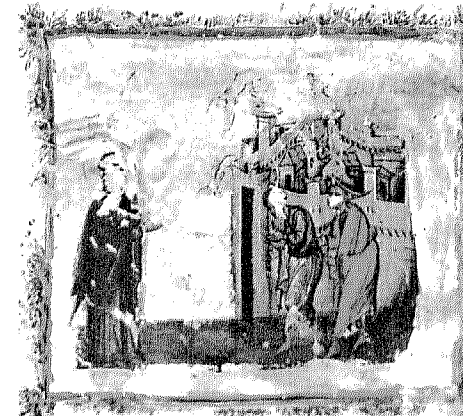
155. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



156. Oikos 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



161. Oikos 14, Nativity - The Strange Birth, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



159. Oikos 11, Flashing the light of truth in Egypt, Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



157. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



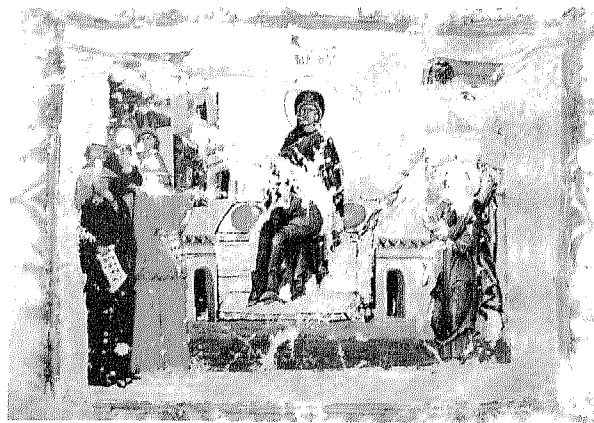
162. Oikos 15, Enthroned Christ (the Double Nature of Christ), MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360



160. Oikos 13, The New Creation, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



158. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



163. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



164. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



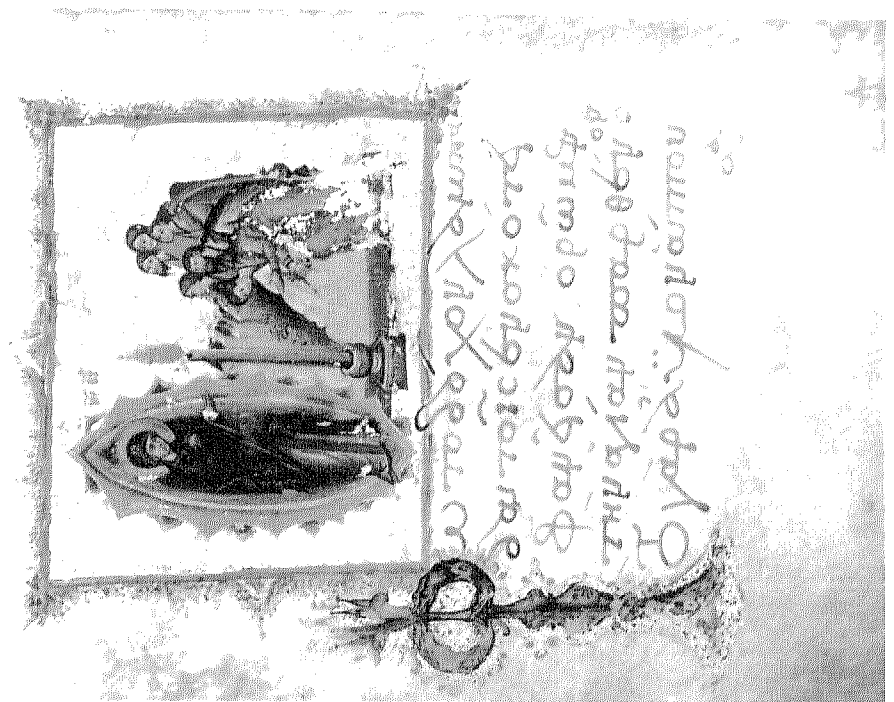
165. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



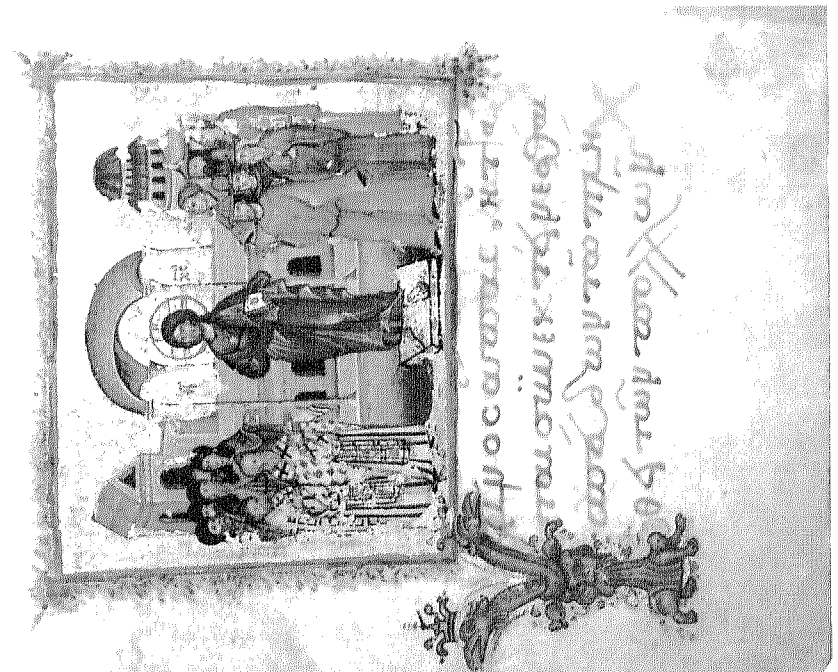
166. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



167. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



169. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



168. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



170. Oikos 1, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 2ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



172. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 4vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



171. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 3vo, Escorial, c. 1400 A.D.



173. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 6vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



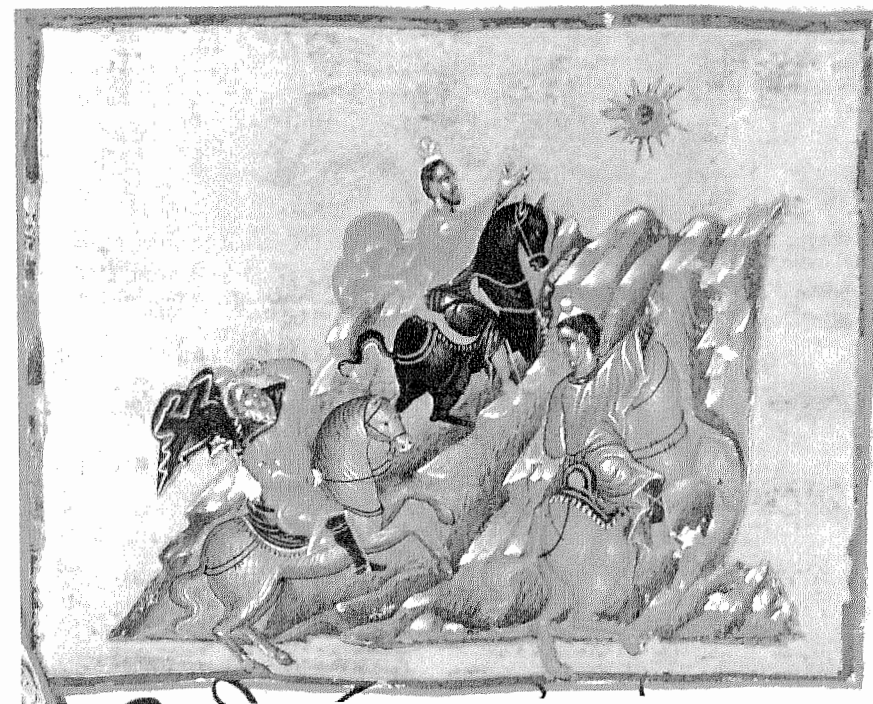
174. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 7ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



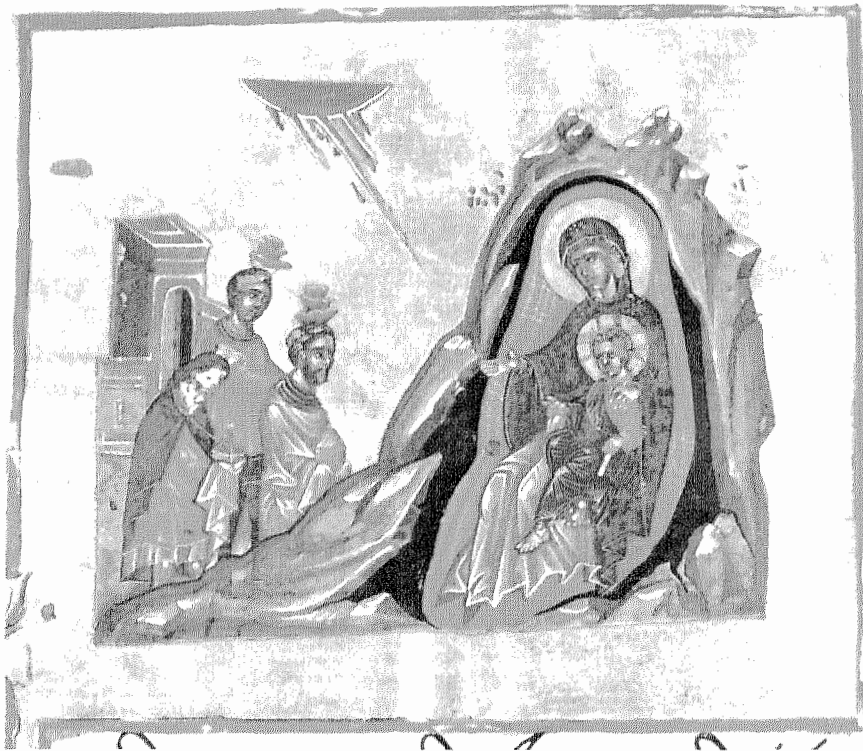
176. Oikos 7, Nativity - the shepherds heard the angels singing, Codex R.I. 19, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



175. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 8vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



177. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 11vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



178. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 12vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



179. Oikos 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 14vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



ἄλλοις συμβῶν
τοῦ πρῶτος αἰῶνος
μετίσταται τοῦ ἀπα-
τάματος, ὅπως δόθηκε ὡς
βρῆος αὐτῷ ἄλλ'

180. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 17ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



181. Oikos 11, *Flashing the light of truth in Egypt*, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 15ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



183. Oikos 14, *Nativity - The Strange Birth*, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 19vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



182. Oikos 13, *The New Creation*, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 18ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



184. Oikos 15, *Enthroned Christ (the Double Nature of Christ)*, Codex R.I. 19, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



185. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 21vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



187. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



186. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 22vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



188. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



189. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 26ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



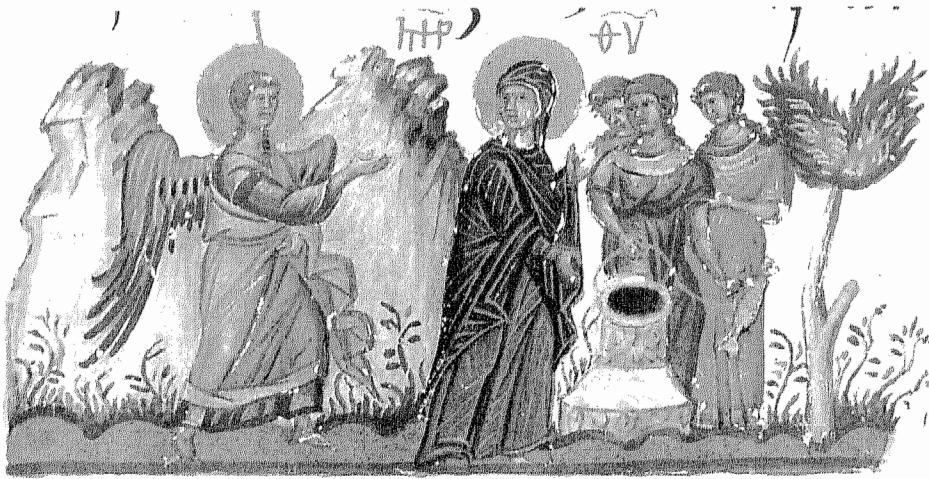
190. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



191. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



192-193. Stanzas 1-2, Two Annunciation Scenes, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



194. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 282vo, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



197. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



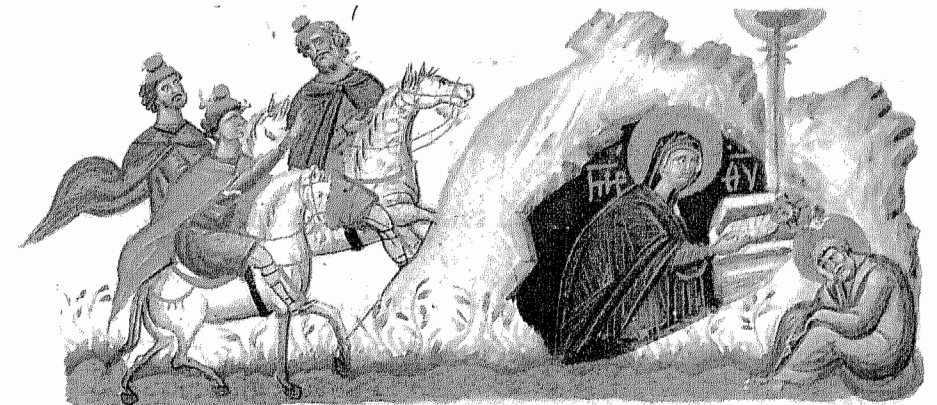
195. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



198. Stanza 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Tomic Psalter, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



196. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



199. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



200. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



201. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360



202. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



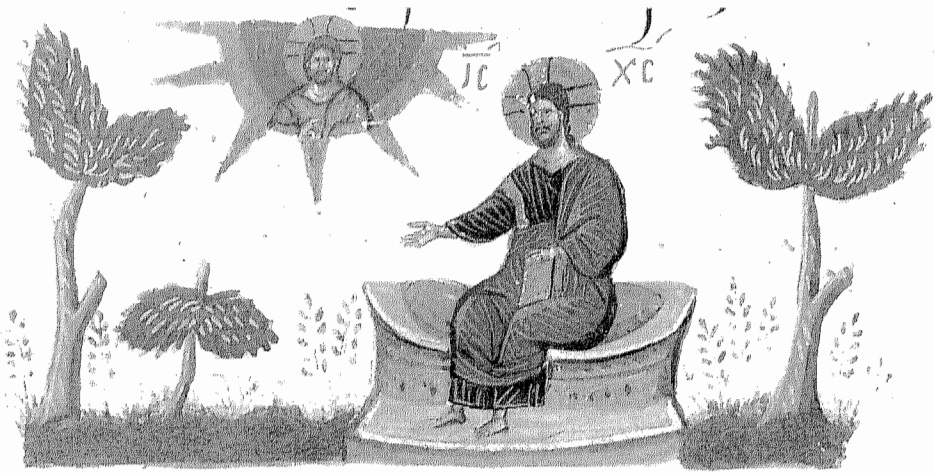
203. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Tomic Psalter, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



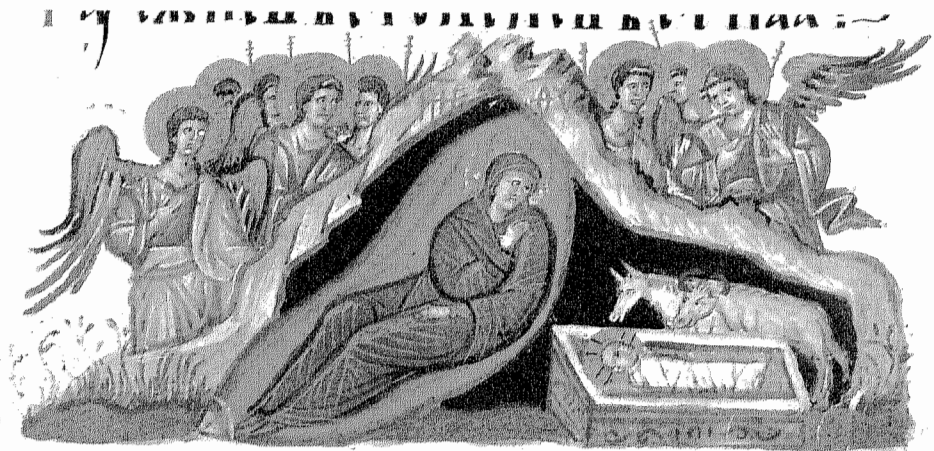
204. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



205. Stanza 14, Nativity - the Strange Birth, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



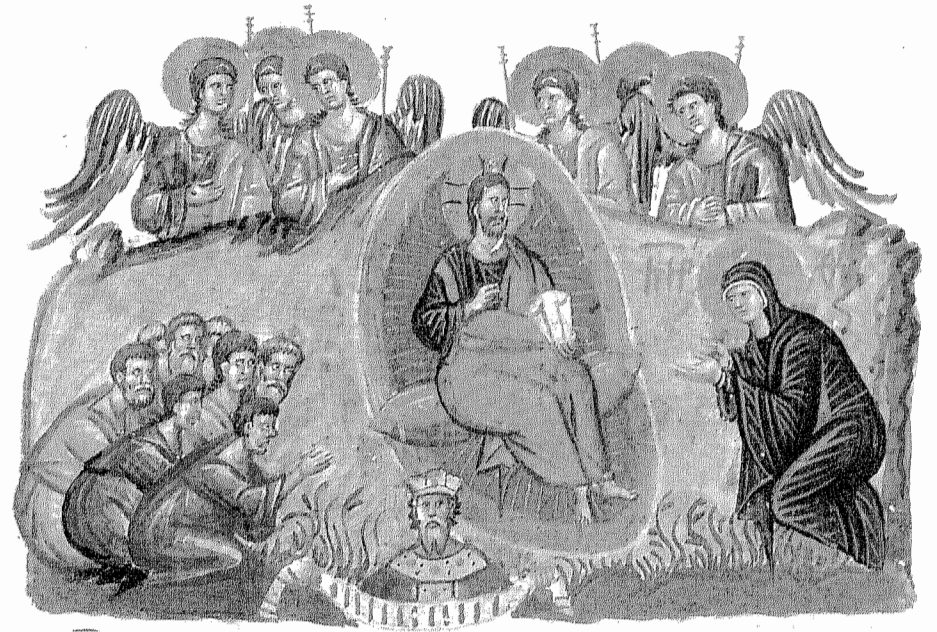
206. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



207. Stanza 16, Nativity - Astounded Angels, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



208. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



209. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



210. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



211. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



212. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



213. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360



214. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



215. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



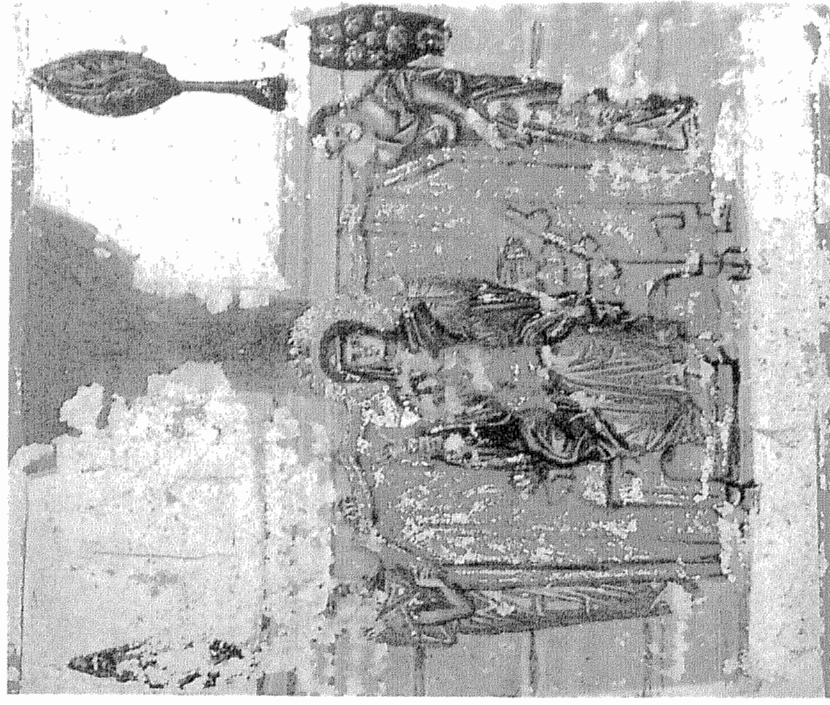
217. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 211ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



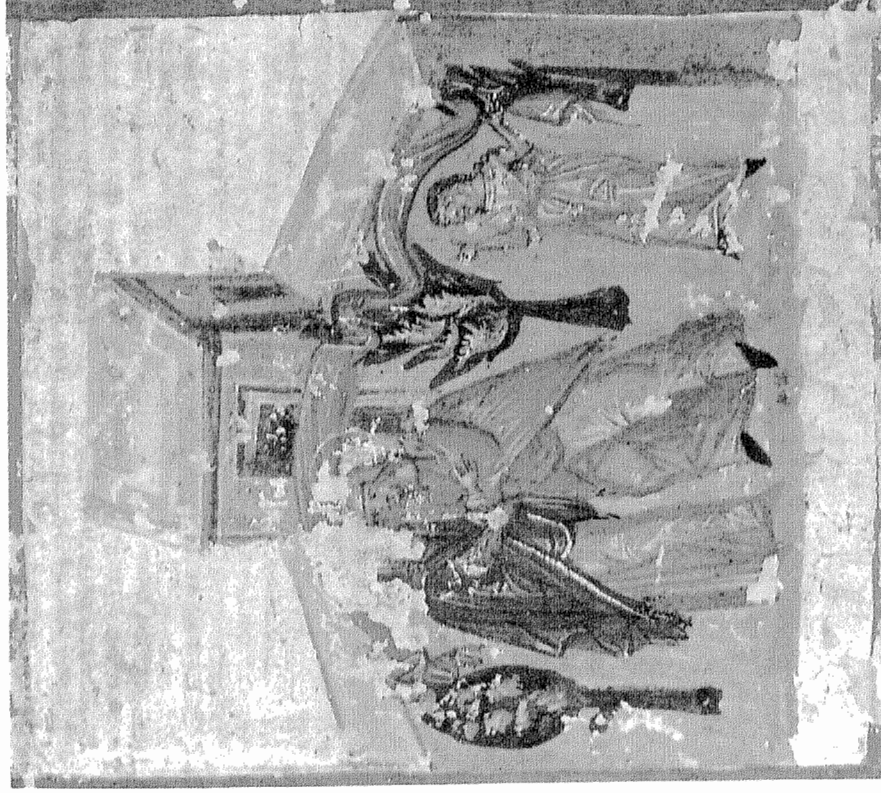
216. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Angel sent from Heaven, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 210vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th c.



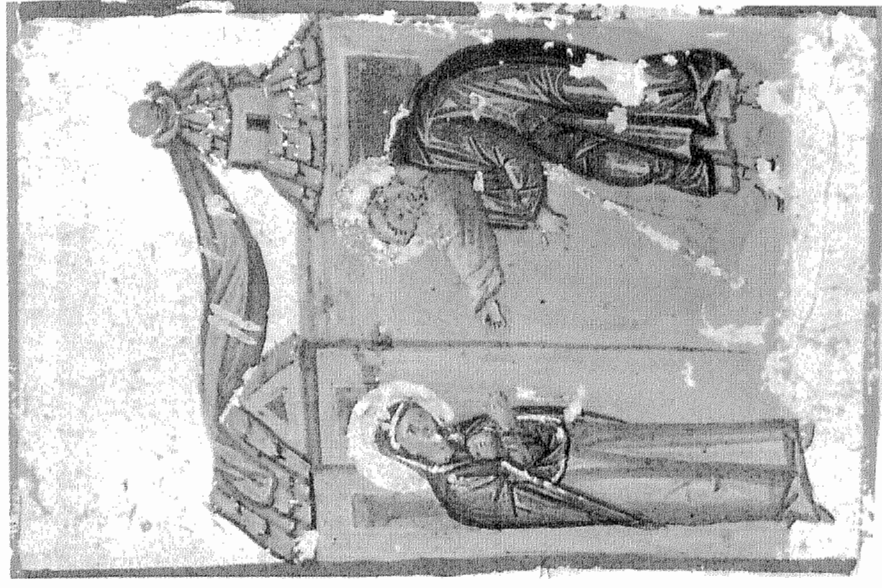
218. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 211vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



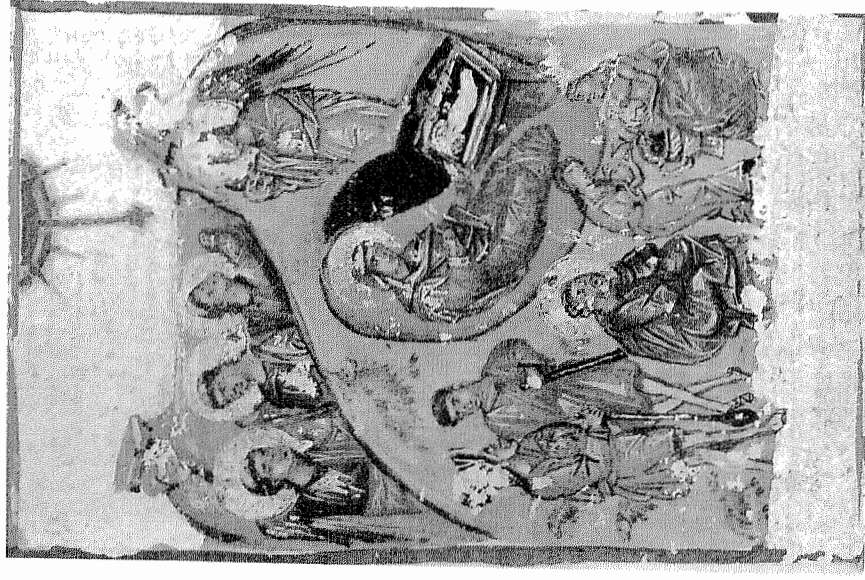
219. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 212ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of 14th c.



220. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 212vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



221. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 213ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter 14th c.



222. Stanza 7, Nativity, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 213vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last qu. 14th c.



223. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 214ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



224. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 214vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter 14th c.



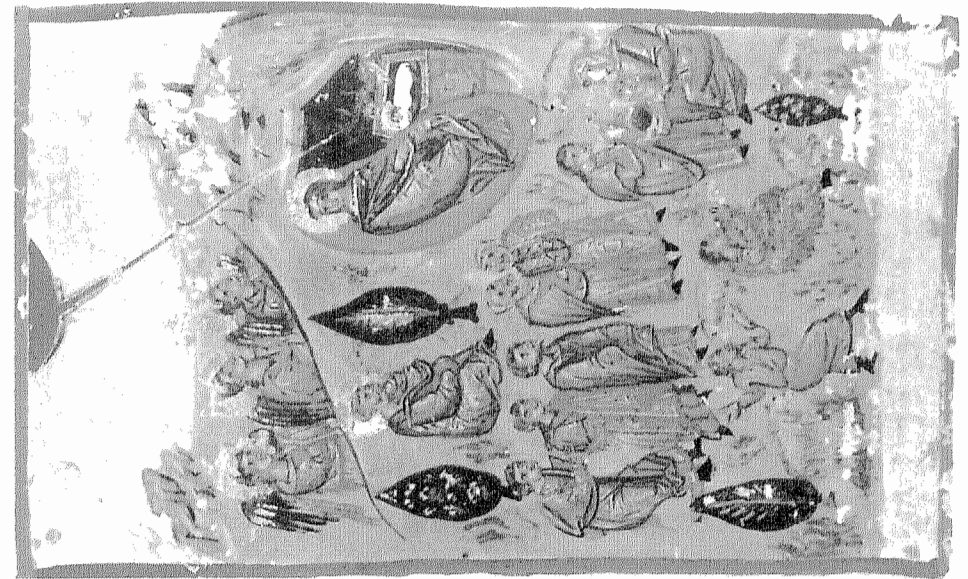
225. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 215vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



226. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 215ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



227. Stanza 12, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 216ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



229. Stanza 14, Nativity - The Strange Birth, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, f. 217vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last qu. 14th c.



228. Stanza 13, The New Creation, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 216vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



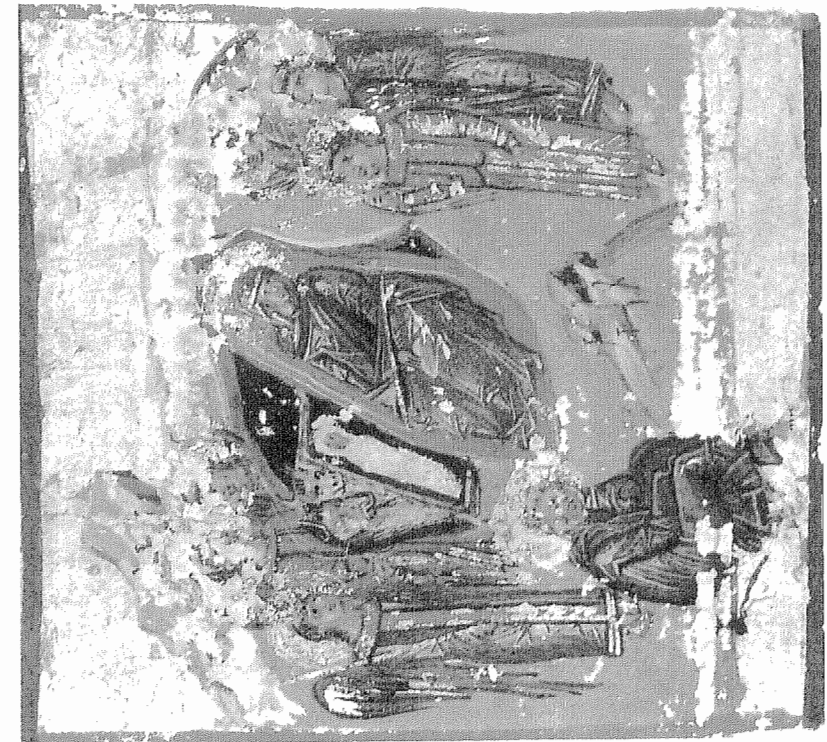
230. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 218ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



231. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 219vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



233. Stanza 17, The Voiceless Orators, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 219ro, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



232. Stanza 16, Nativity - the Astounded Angels, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 218vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th c.



ЕЛИШІН ПІІАШНІАА ПРННОШЕНІА,
 АКОЖ НЗБАВНІСКРЬБЫ ВСѢХЪ.
 ДОУЩЕН НЗМНМОУКЫ ТЕБѢ
 ІЮЩІНХЪ, АЛЛА: ПѢ. З. ІРМО

234. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the icon of the Virgin, Serbian Psalter, Cod. Slav. 4, fol. 222vo, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, last quarter of the 14th century.



235. Akathistos Icon with Koimesis, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



236. Oikoi 1-2, Two Annunciation Scenes, Skopelos Icon, first half of the 15th century.



237. Oikoi 4-5, The Conception of Christ and the Visitation, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



238-239. Oikoi 6-7, The Doubts of Joseph and the Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



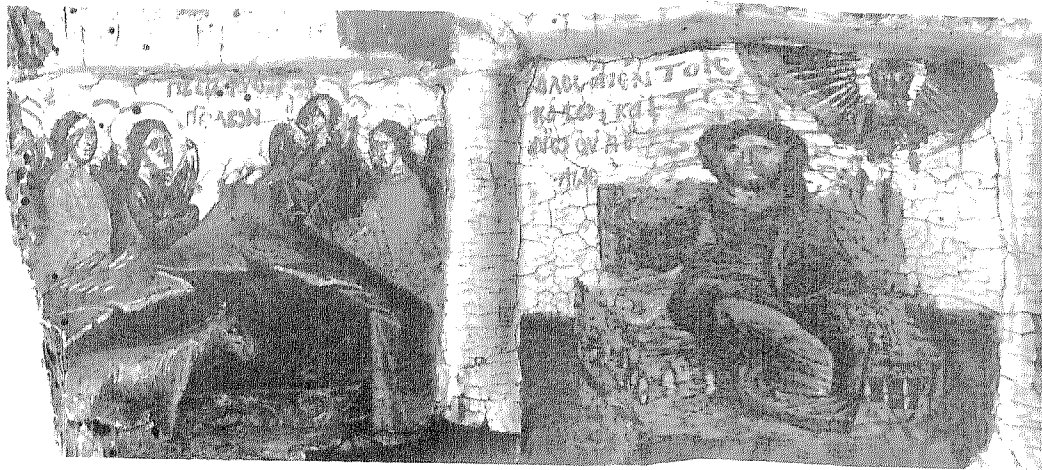
240-241. Oikoi 9-10, The Adoration of the Magi and the Return of the Magi to Babylon, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



242-243. Oikoi 11-12, The Flight into Egypt and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



244-245. Oikoi 13-14, The New Creation and the Strange Birth, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



246. Oikoi 16 and 15, The Astounded Angels and the Double Nature of Christ, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



247-248. Oikoi 17-18, The Voiceless Orators and the Salvation of the World, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



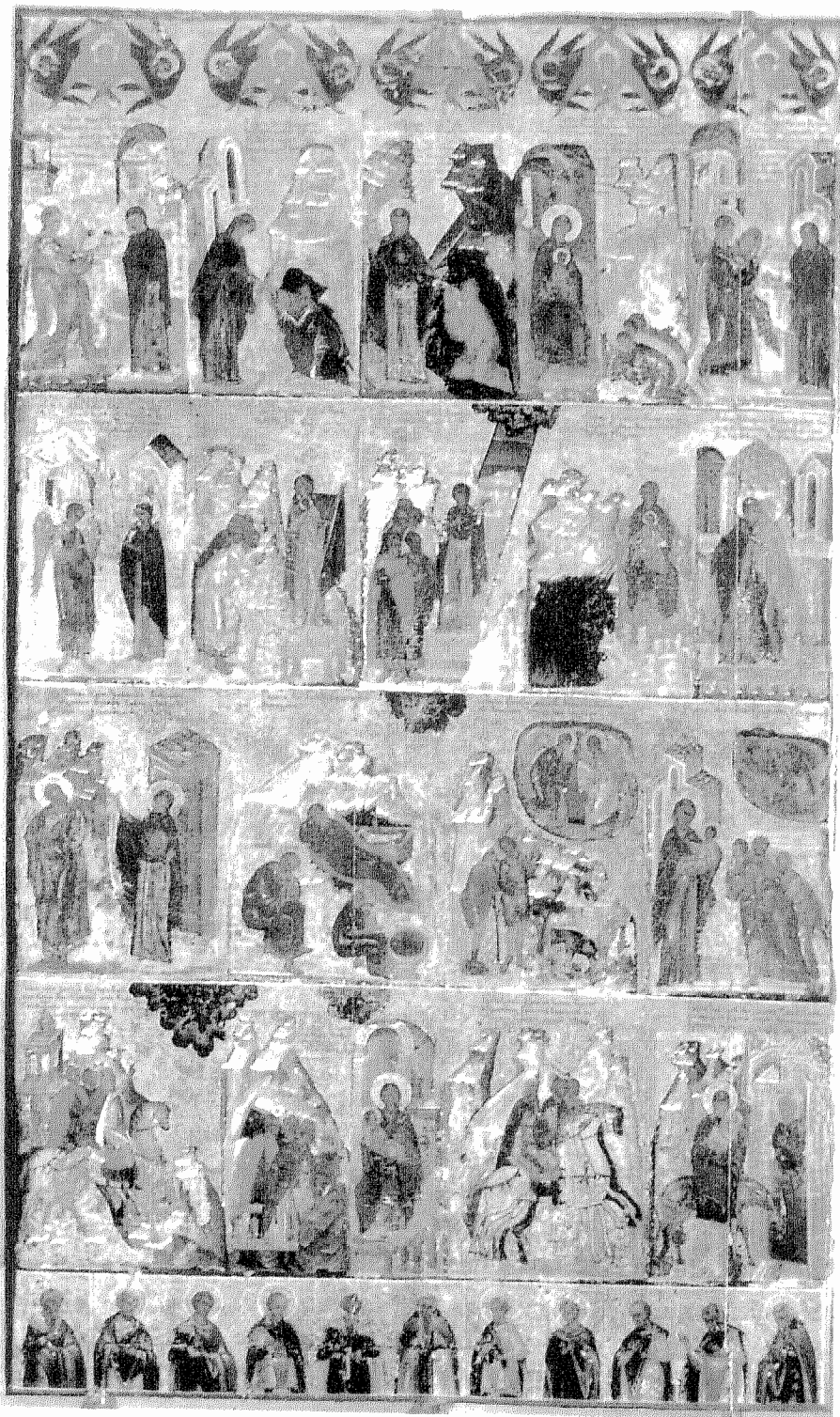
249-250. Oikoi 19-20, The Defence of Virgins and the Defeated Hymns, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



251. Oikoi 22 and 21, The Cancellation of the Old Debts and the Shining Lamp; Apostles on clouds from the Koimesis, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



252. Oikoi 23-24, Singing Your Giving Birth and the Offering of the Hymn, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



253. Stanzas 1-3 and 5-11, Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century



254. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



255. Stanza 1, Salutation 3: Hail, redemption of fallen Adam, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



256. Stanza 1, Salutation 4: Hail, deliverance of the tears of Eve, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



257. Stanza 1, Salutation 7: Hail to you, the throne of the king, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



258. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



259. Stanza 3, Salutation 7: *Hail, celestial ladder by which God has descended*, Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beg. of the 15th cent..



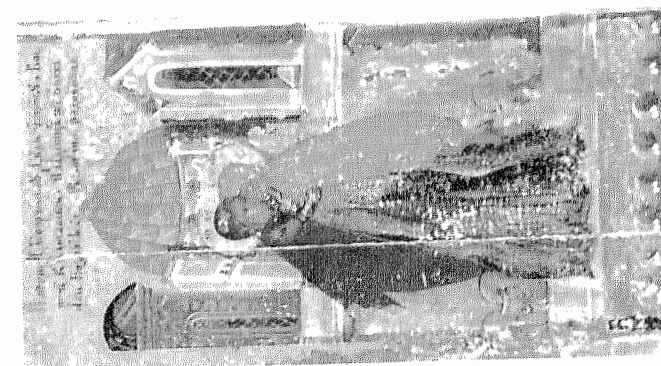
260. Stanza 3, Salutation 8: *Hail, bridge that bears men from earth to heaven*, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beg. of 15th c.



261. Stanza 3, Salutation 9: *Hail to you, mysterious mother of light*, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beg. of 15th c.



263. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, detail, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



262. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



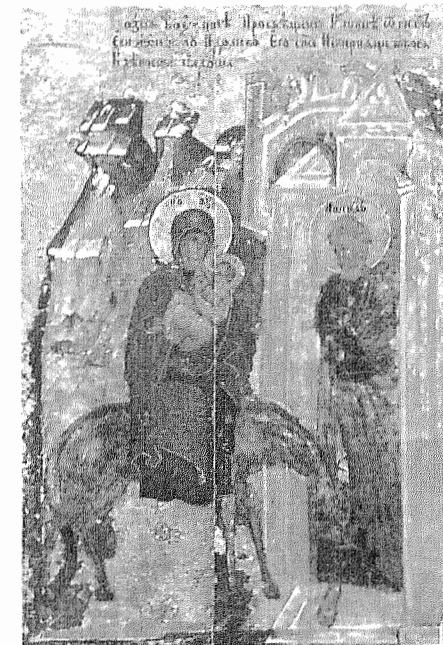
264. Stanza 7, The Nativity, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



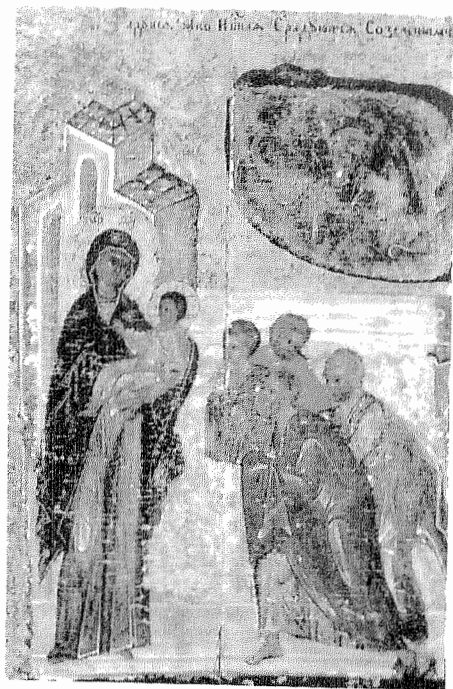
265. Stanza 7, *The shepherds heard the angels singing*, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th c.



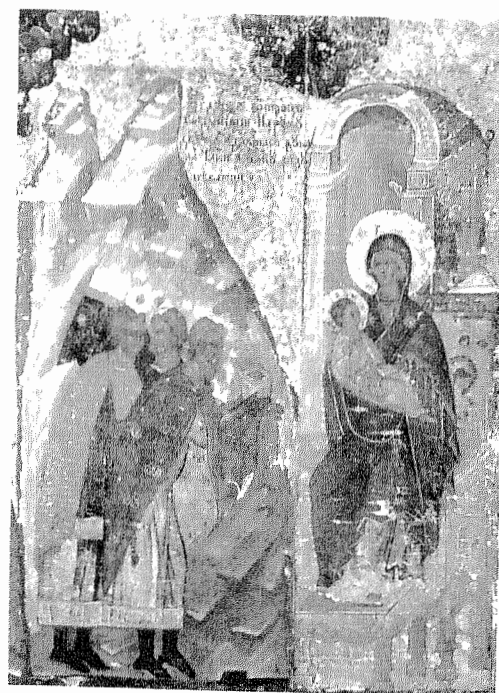
268. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



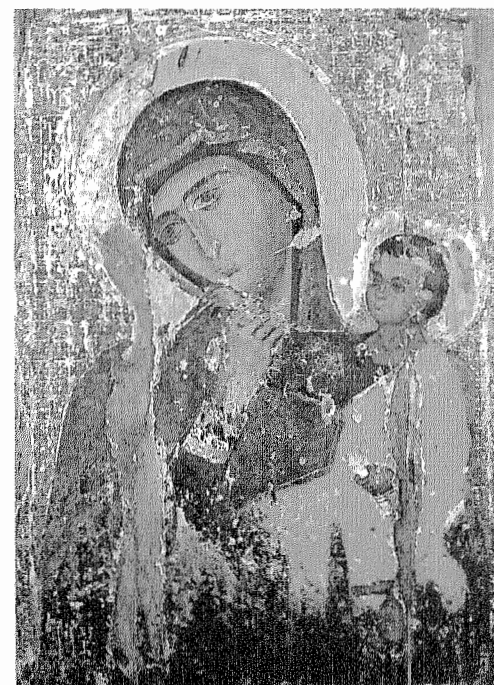
269. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



266. Stanza 7, Salutation 5: *Hail, for the skies rejoice with the earth*, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beg. of 15th c.



267. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



270. The Virgin *Cheirophilousa*, Icon from the Church of Chrysaliniotissa, Nicosia, 13th c., with later repainting



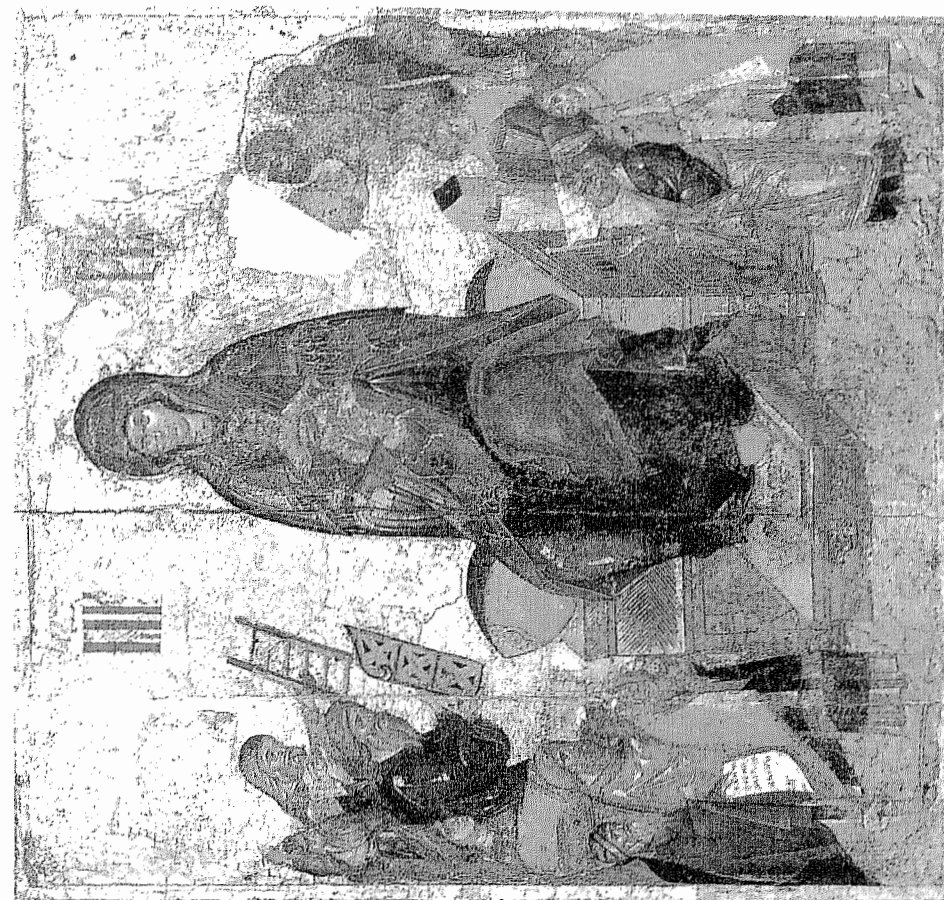
270a. The Virgin *Cheirophilousa*, lost Icon from the Monastery of St. John Chrysostom, Koutsoventis, Cyprus, 14th c., with later repainting



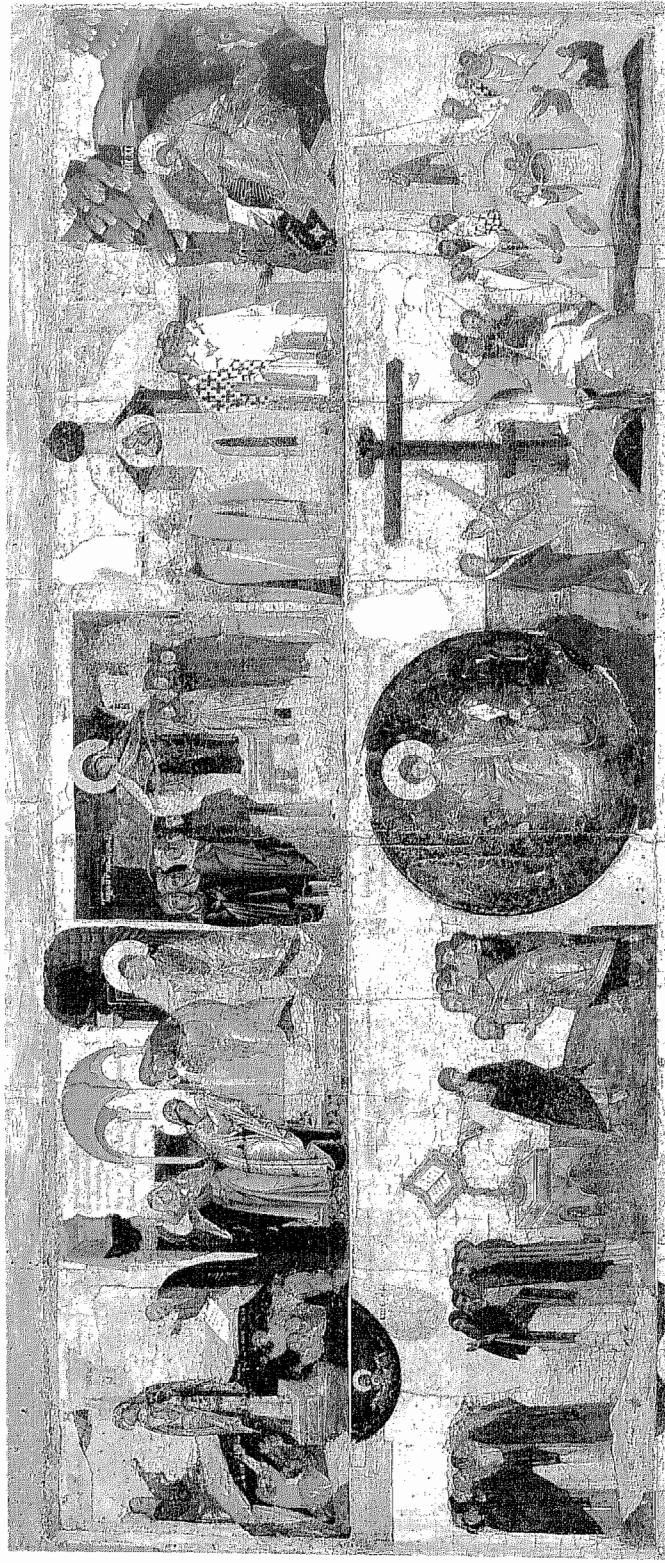
271. Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century



272. Prophets, detail of Fig. 273



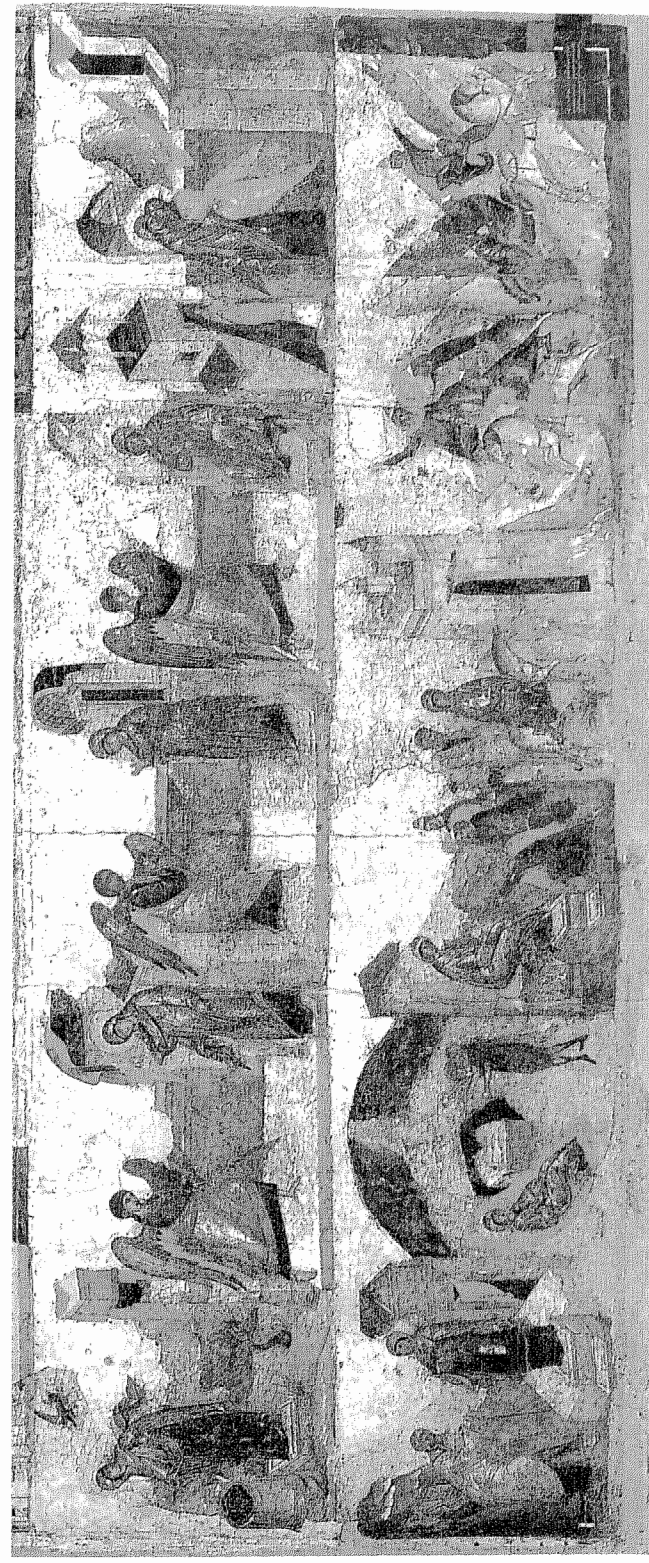
273. The Prophets from Above (*Pochvala Bogomateri*), Uspenskij Icon, detail of Fig. 271



274. Upper part of the Akathistos icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century

Upper zone: Stanza 21 (*ikos* 11) The Shining Lamp; Stanza 12 (*kondak* 17) The Presentation of Christ in the Temple; Stanza 19 (*ikos* 10) The Defence of Virgins; Stanza 23 (*ikos* 12) The Living Temple; Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12) The Cancellation of the Old Debts - Anastasis.

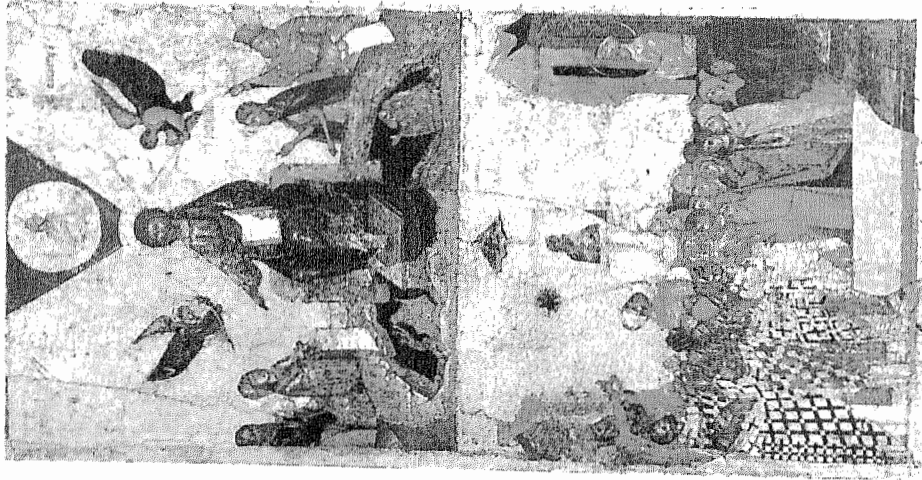
Lower zone: Stanza 14 (*kondak* 8) The Strange Birth; Stanza 13 (*ikos* 7) The New Creation; Stanza 16 (*kondak* 9) The Astounded angels; Stanza 18 (*kondak* 10) The Salvation of the World - Helkomenos; Stanza 20 (*kondak* 11) The Defeated Hymns.



275. Lower part of the Akathistos icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century

Upper zone: Stanza 1 (*ikos* 1) Annunciation at the well, *Angel sent from Heaven*; Stanza 2 (*kondak* 2) Annunciation; Stanza 3 (*ikos* 2) Annunciation; Stanza 4 (*kondak* 3) Annunciation (the Conception of Christ); Stanza 5 (*ikos* 3) The Visitation

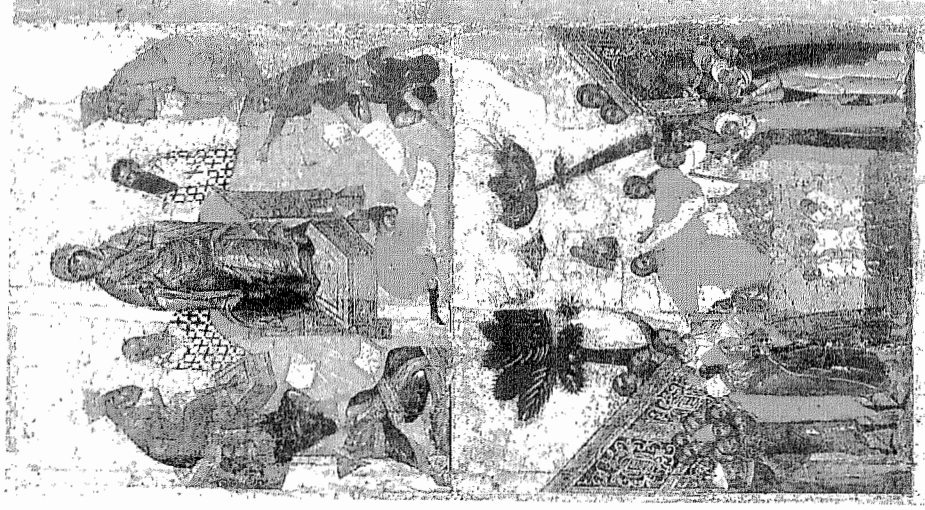
Lower zone: Stanza 6 (*kondak* 4) The Doubts of Joseph; Stanza 7 (*ikos* 4) The Adoration of Shepherds; Stanza 9 (*ikos* 5) The Adoration of the Magi; Stanza 11 (*ikos* 6) The Flight into Egypt; Stanza 8 (*kondak* 5) The Journey of the Magi; Stanza 10 (*kondak* 6) The Return of the Magi to Babylon



276. Top: Stanza 15 (*ikos 8*), The Double Nature. Bottom: *Prooemion* (*kondak 1*), Veneration of the icon of the Virgin

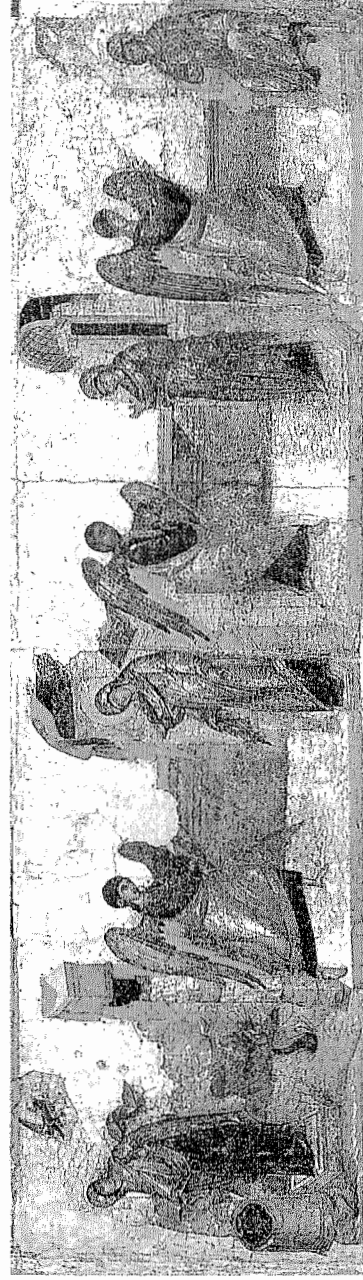


277. Stanza 16 (*kondak 9*) The Astounded Angels



278. Top: Stanza 17 (*ikos 12*), The Voiceless Orators
Bottom: Stanza 24 (*kondak 13*) The Offering of the Hymn

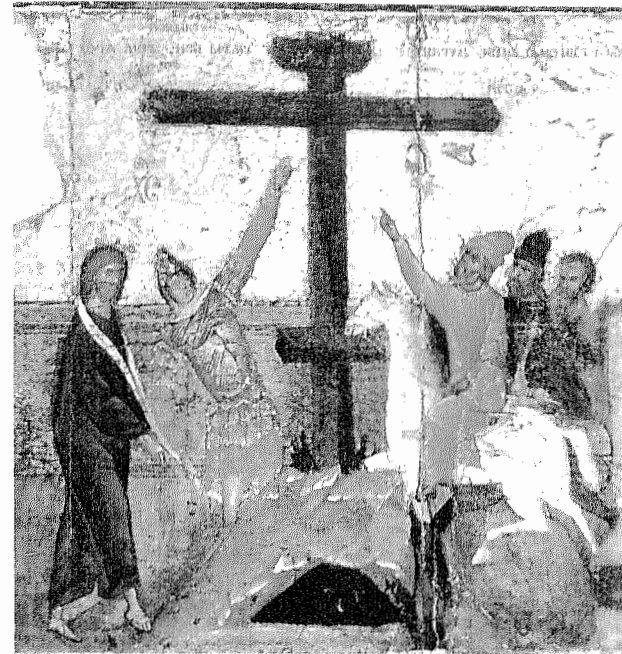
Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century



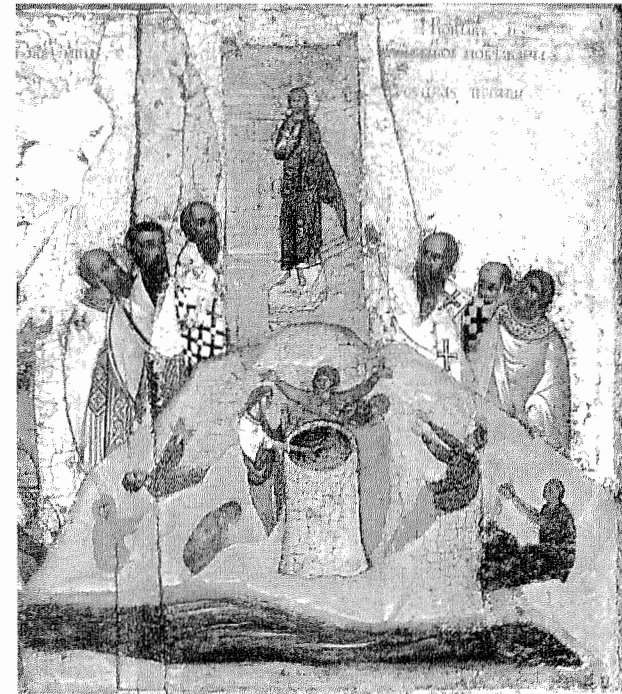
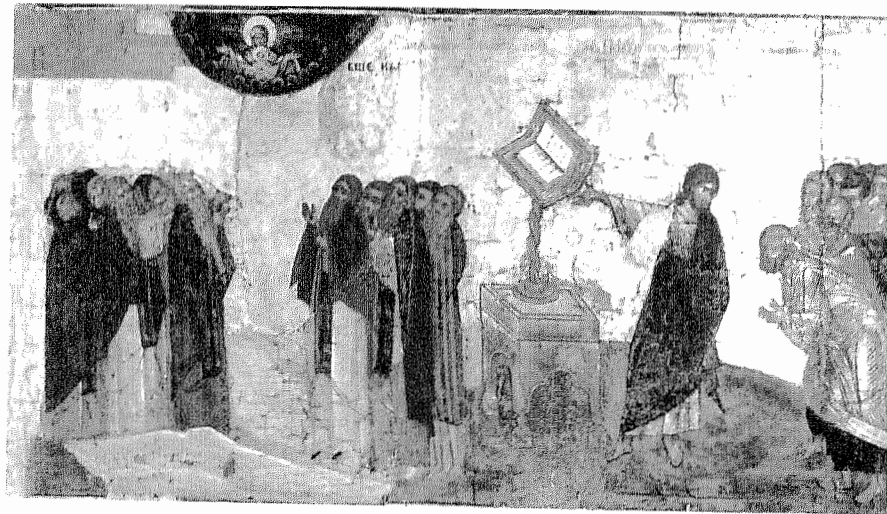
279. Detail of the lower part (upper zone) of the Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th c.
Four Annunciation scenes decorating the first four stanzas: Stanza 1 (*ikos 1*) Annunciation at the Well, *Angel sent from Heaven*; Stanza 2 (*kondak 2*) Annunciation; Stanza 3 (*ikos 2*) Annunciation; Stanza 4 (*kondak 3*) Annunciation - the Conception of Christ



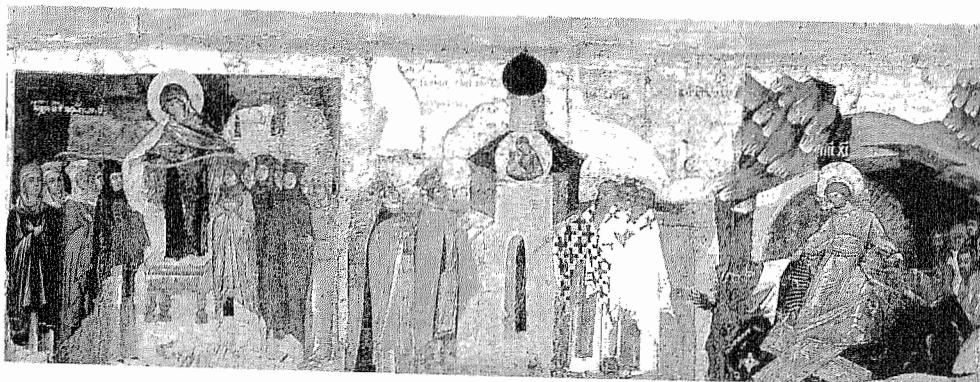
280. Detail of the lower zone of the Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century
Stanza 9 (*ikos 5*) The Adoration of the Magi; Stanza 11 (*ikos 6*) The Flight into Egypt; Stanza 8 (*kondak 5*) The Journey of the Magi; Stanza 10 (*kondak 6*) The Return of the Magi to Babylon



284. Stanza 18 (*kondak* 10), The Salvation of the World - Helkomenos, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, 2nd half 14th c.



285. Stanza 20 (*kondak* 11), The Defeated Hymns, Akathistos Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century



Akathistos, Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century
281. Stanza 21 (*ikos* 11), Shining Lamp. Stanza 12 (*kondak* 7), The Presentation of Christ in the Temple
282. Stanza 14 (*kondak* 8), The Strange Birth. Stanza 13 (*ikos* 7), The New Creation
283. Stanza 19 (*ikos* 10), The Defence of Virgins. Stanza 23 (*ikos* 12), The Living Temple. Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12), The Cancellation of the Old Debts - Anastasis



286. Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12), The Cancellation of the Old Debts - Anastasis, Akathistos
Icon no. 1065, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow, 14th century



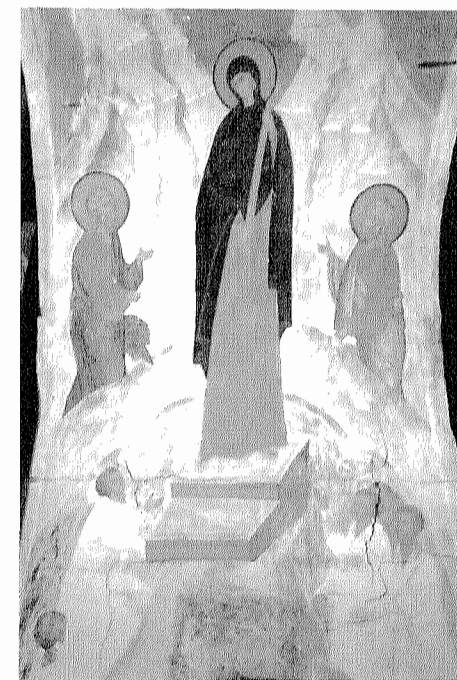
288. Stanzas 17-18 (*ikos* 9, *kondak* 10), The Voiceless Orators and the Salvation of the World -
Helkomenos, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.



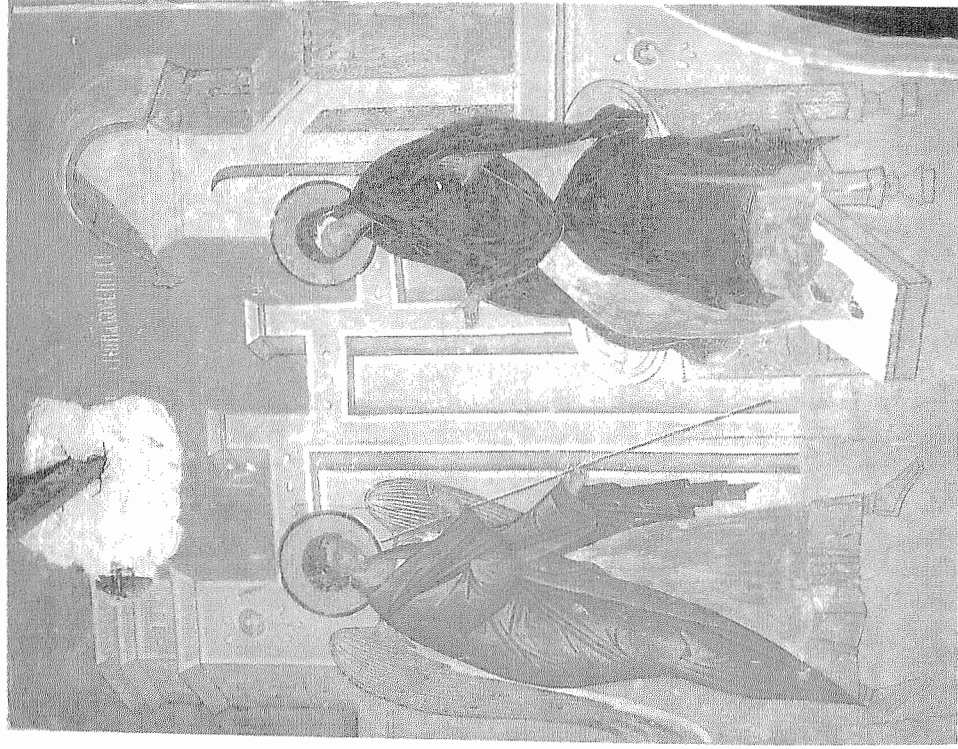
287. Stanza 15 (*ikos* 8), The Double Nature of Christ, St. Ferapont Monastery
near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.



289. Stanza 20 (*kondak* 11), The Defeated Hymns,
St. Ferapont Monastery, 1500-1502 A.D.



290. Stanza 21 (*ikos* 11), The Shining Lamp, St.
Ferapont Monastery, 1500-1502 A.D.



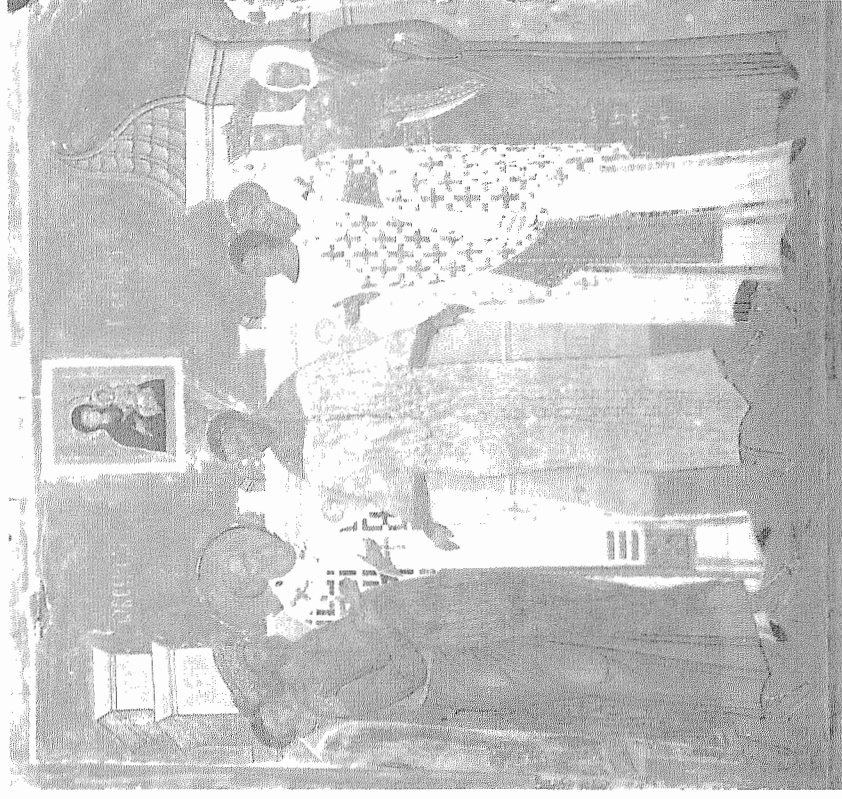
291. Stanza 4 (*kondak* 3). Annunciation - the Conception of Christ, St. Ferapont



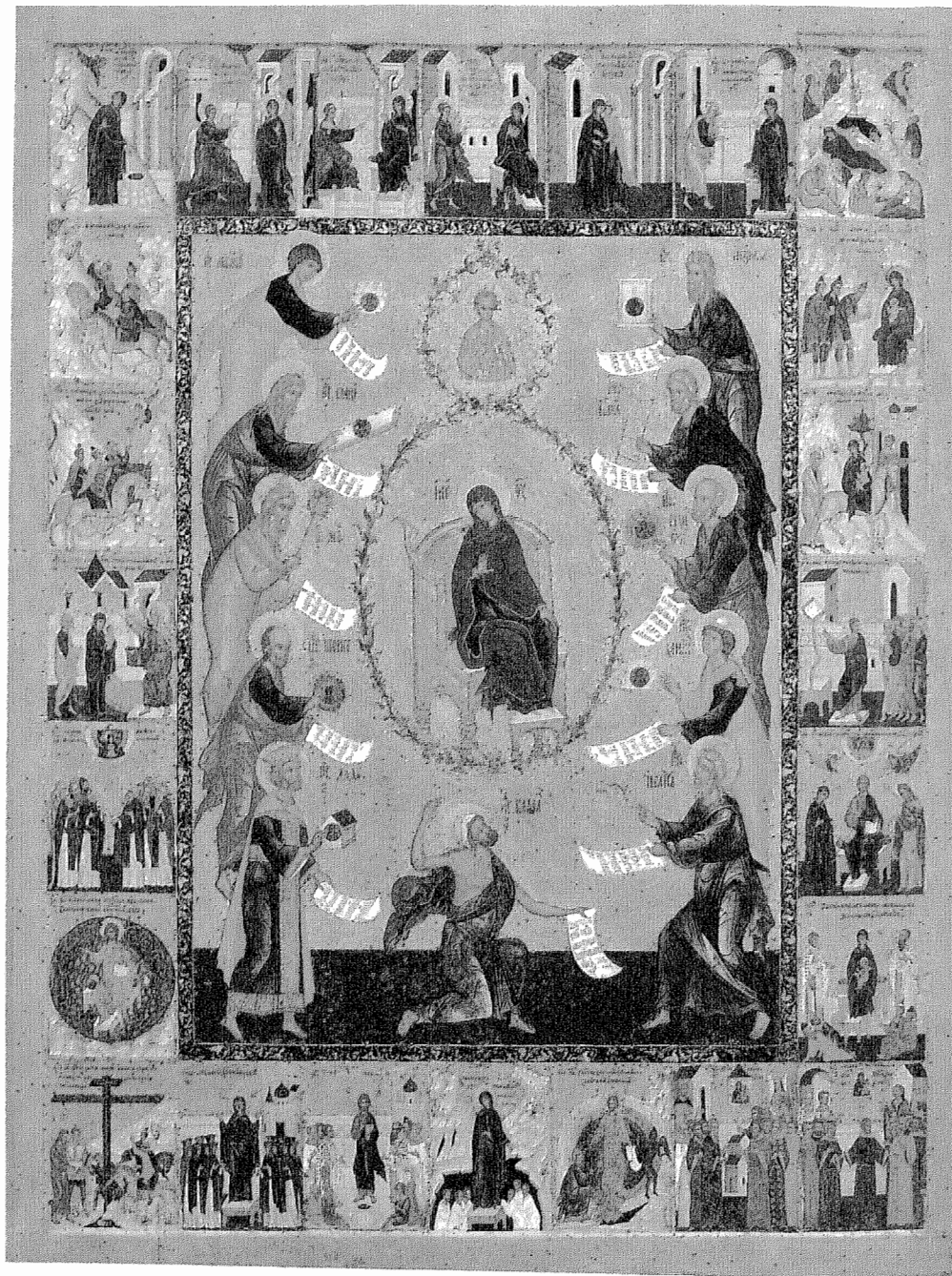
292. Stanza 22 (*kondak* 12). The Cancellation of the Old Debts, St. Ferapont



293. Stanza 23 (*ikos* 12). The Living Temple, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.



294. Stanza 24 (*kondak* 13). The Offering of the Hymn, St. Ferapont Monastery, near Vologda, 1500-1502 A.D.



295. Akathistos Icon with *Pochvala Bogomateri* (the Praise of the Mother of God), no. 1834, Russian Museum, St. Petersburg, painted in Moscow between 1550-1570 A.D.



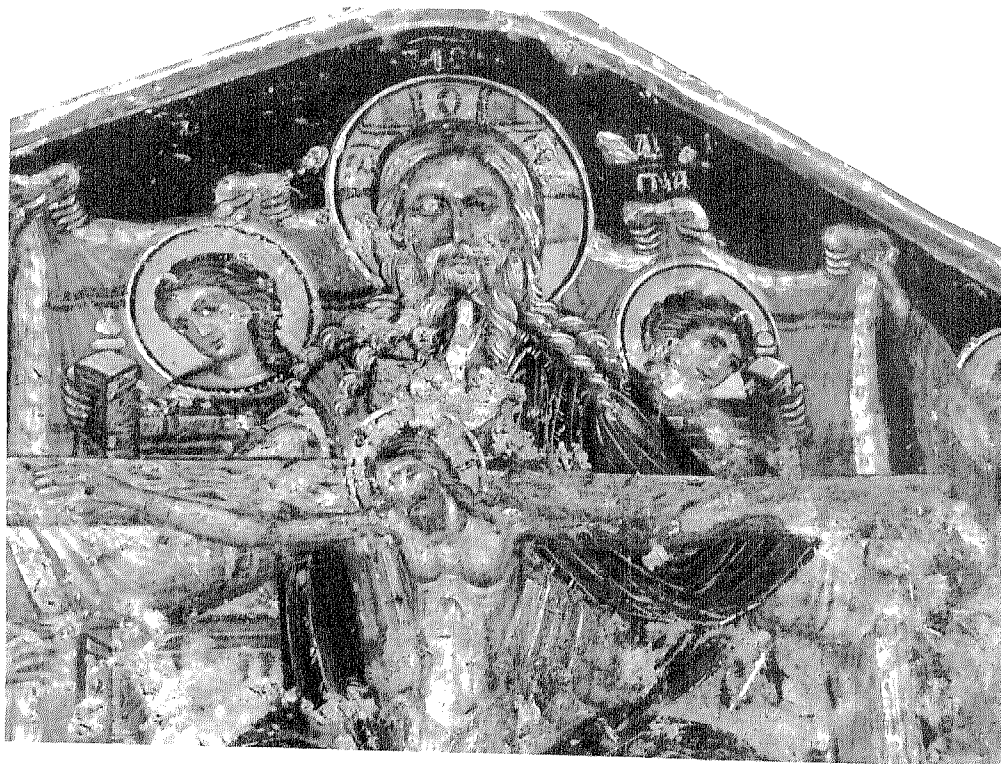
296. The Prophets from Above, Icon in the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai end of the twelfth century



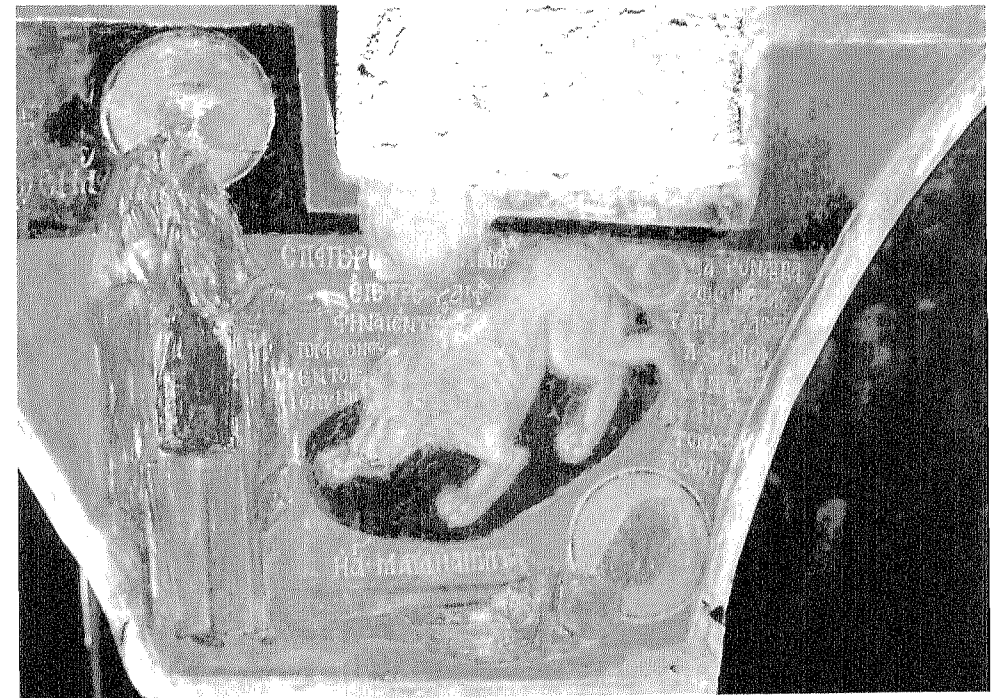
297. The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, Wall Painting in the Katholikon of the Chilandari Monastery, Mount Athos, ca. 1320 A.D.



299. The Great Entrance, Wall Painting in the Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion Province, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



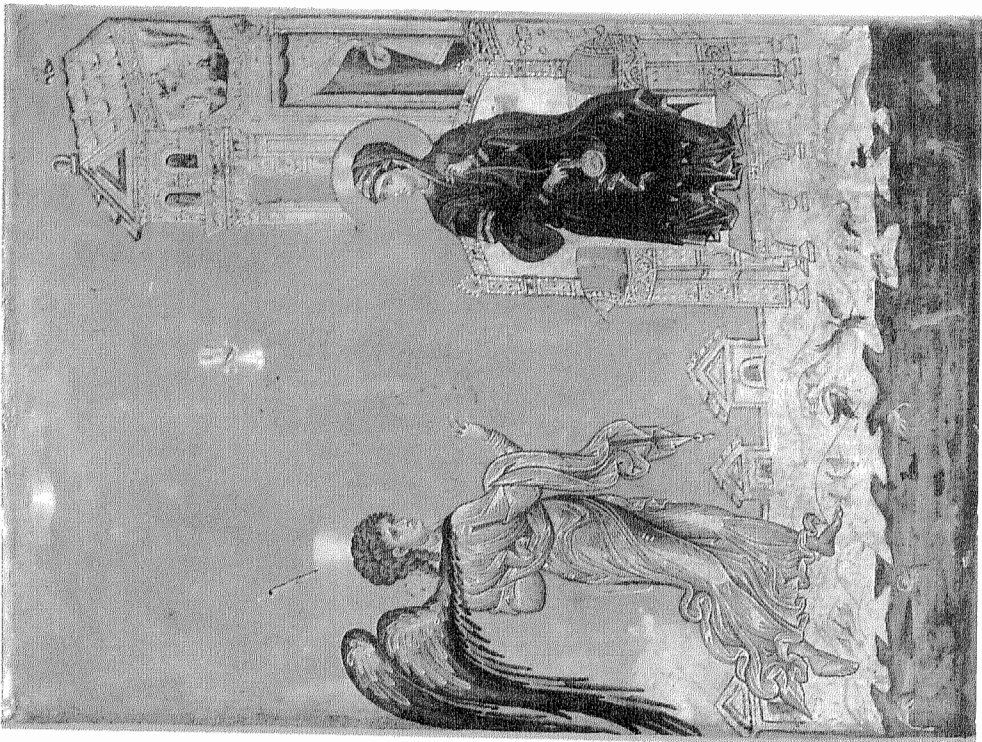
298. The Throne of Mercy, Wall Painting in the Church of the Panagia, Roustika, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



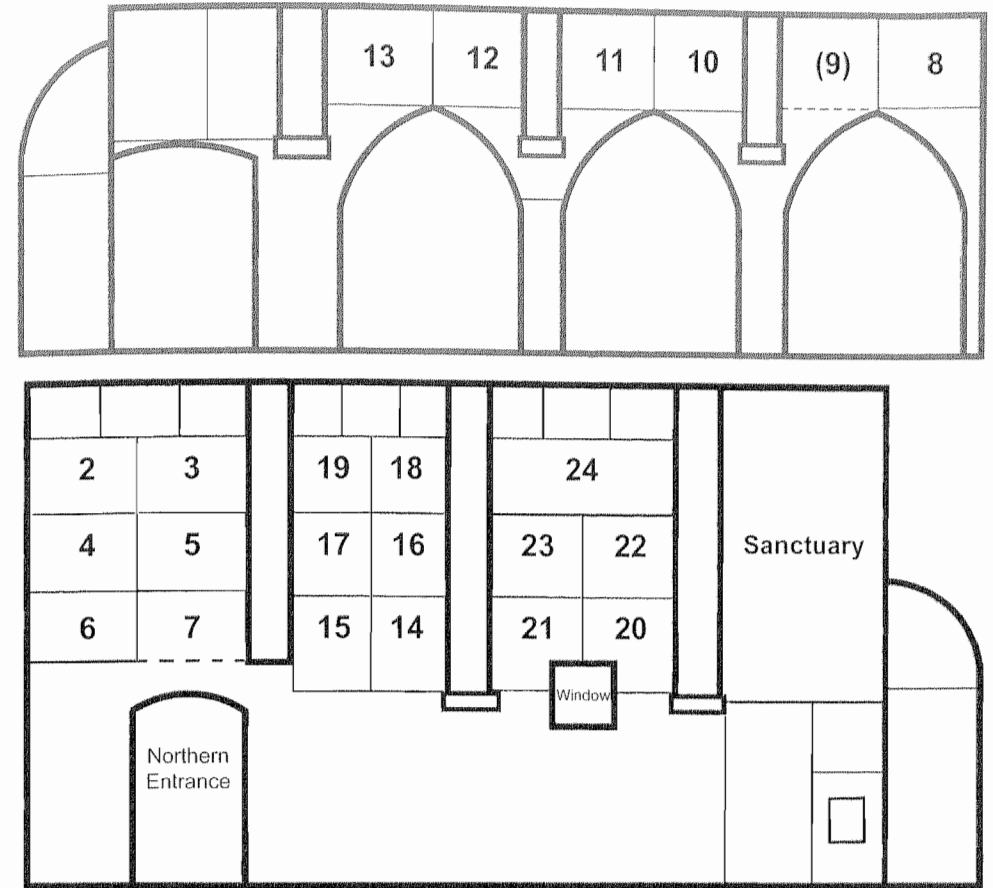
300. St. Zosimas burying St. Mary of Egypt, Wall Painting in the Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside the village of Vorizia, Kainourgion Province, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



302. Annunciation. Icon, detail, Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, end 12th c.



301. Annunciation icon, Monastery of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai, end 12th c.



303. Arrangement of the Akathistos oikoi on the southern wall (top) and the barrel-vault (bottom) of the northern nave of the Church of the Panagia in Meronas, Amari Province, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.



304. Oikos 13, The New Creation, Panagia ton Chalkeon, Thessaloniki, first quarter of the 14th century,

SOUTHERN PART

1	2
9	10
17	18

3	4
11	12
19	20

NORTHERN PART

5	6
13[14]	14[13]
21	22

7	8
15	16
23	24

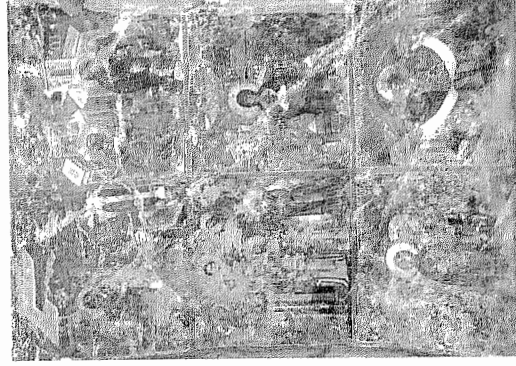
305. Arrangement of the Akathistos oikoi in the northern nave of the Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside Vorizia, Kainourgion Province, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



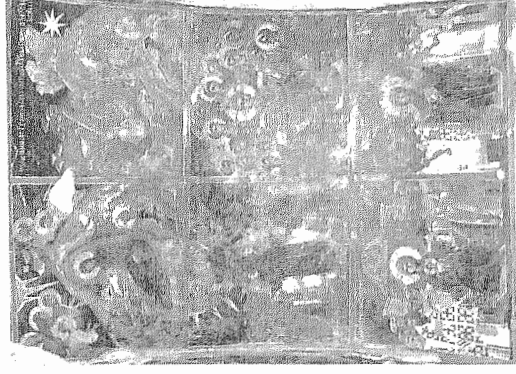
306. Oikoi 1-2, 9-10 and 17-18
N. nave, S. part, middle bay



307. Oikoi 3-4, 11-12 and 19-20
N. nave, S. part, W. bay



308. Oikoi 5-6, 13-14 and 21-22
N. nave, N. part, W. bay

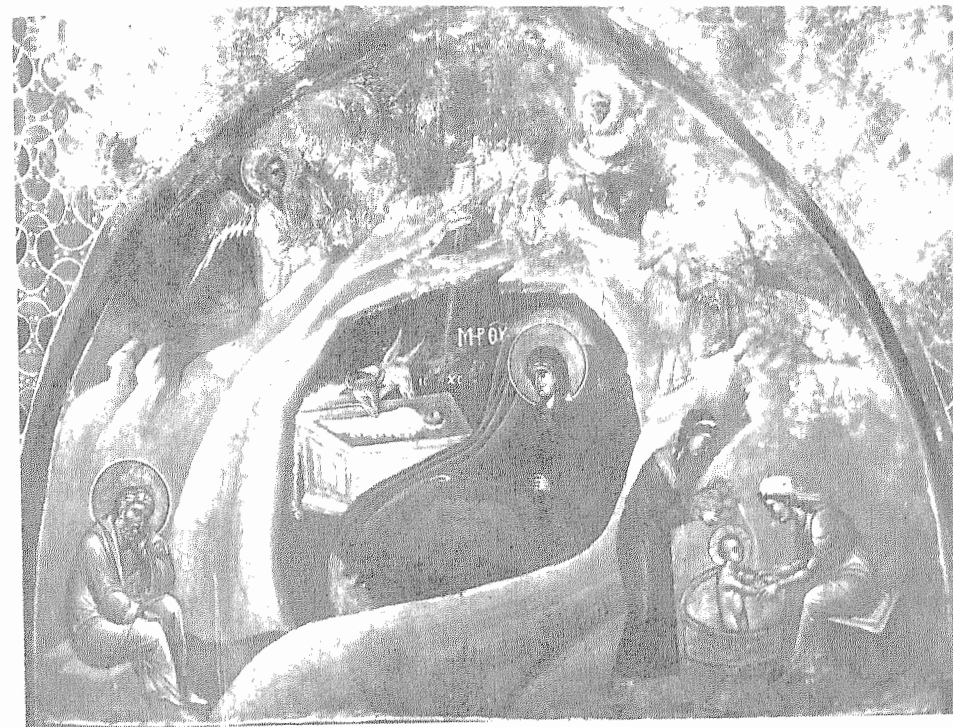


309. Oikoi 7-8, 15-16 and 23-24
N. nave, N. part, middle bay

Akathistos cycle in the northern nave of the Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, outside Vorizia, Kainourgion Province, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



310. Stanza 3, Annunciation, The Doubts of the Virgin, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



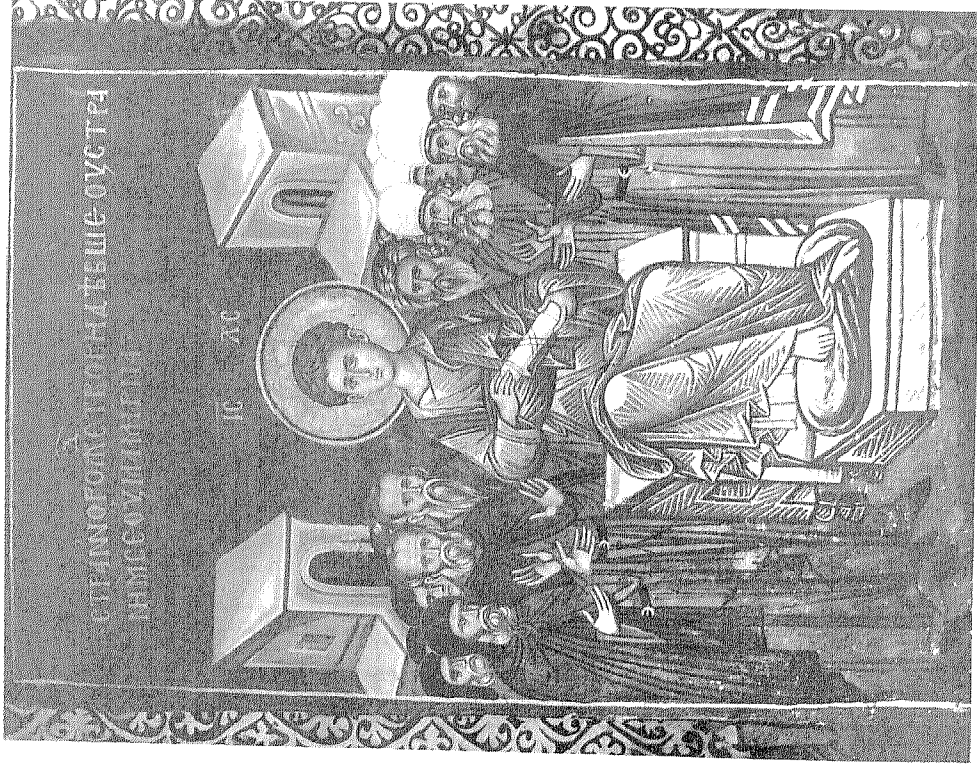
312. Stanza 7, The Nativity - *The shepherds heard the angels singing*, Pantokrator Church, Decani



311. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



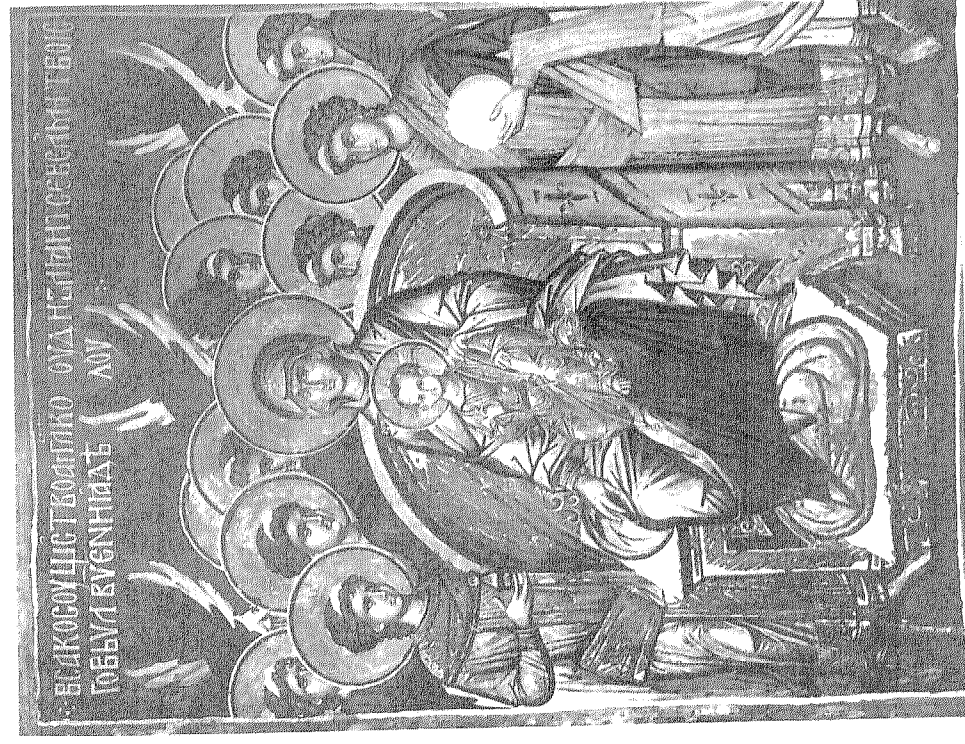
313. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



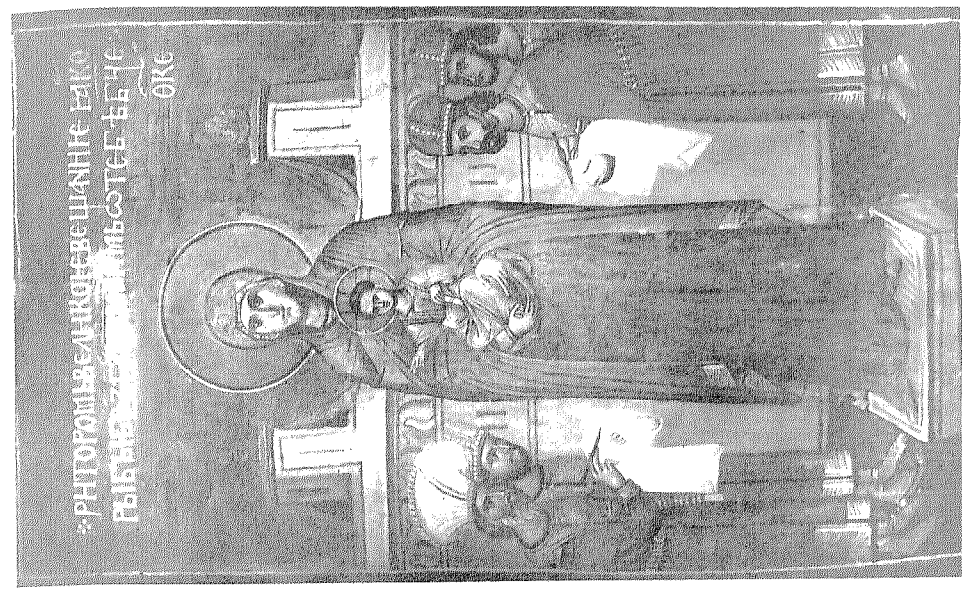
314. Stanza 14, The Strange Birth, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-50 A.D.



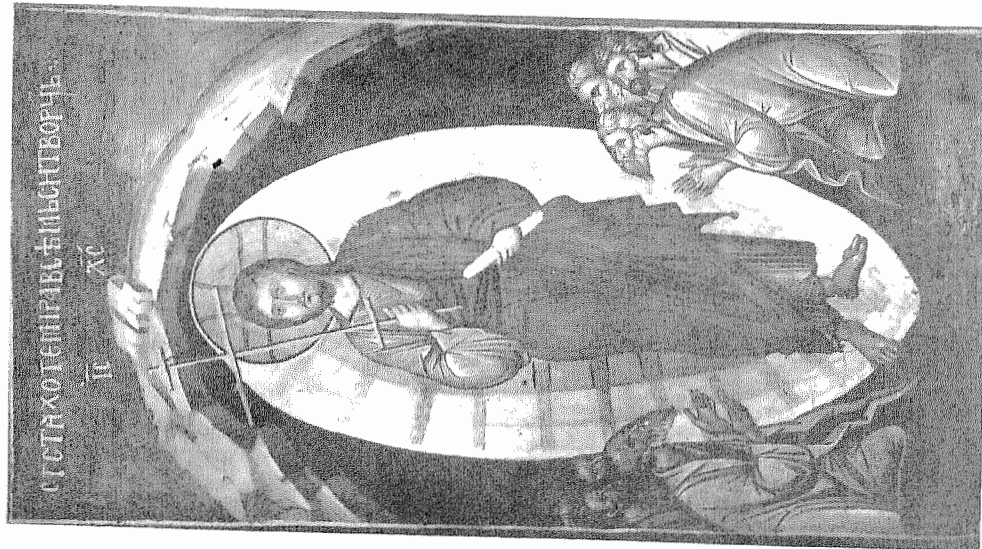
315. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Decani, 1348-50 A.D.



316. Stanza 16, The Astounded Angels, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-50



317. Stanza 17, Voiceless Orators, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



318. Stanza 18, Salvation of the World, Decani, 1348-50



319. Stanza 19, Defence of Virgins, Decani



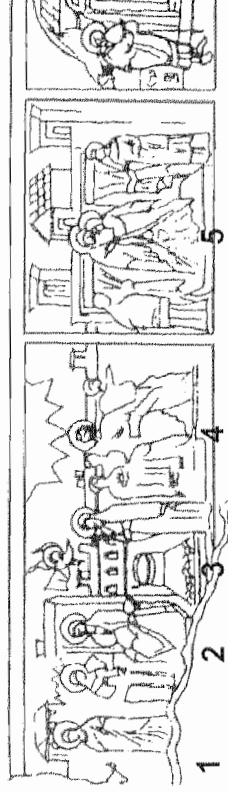
320. Stanza 21, Shining Lamp, Decani, 1348-50 A.D.



322. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



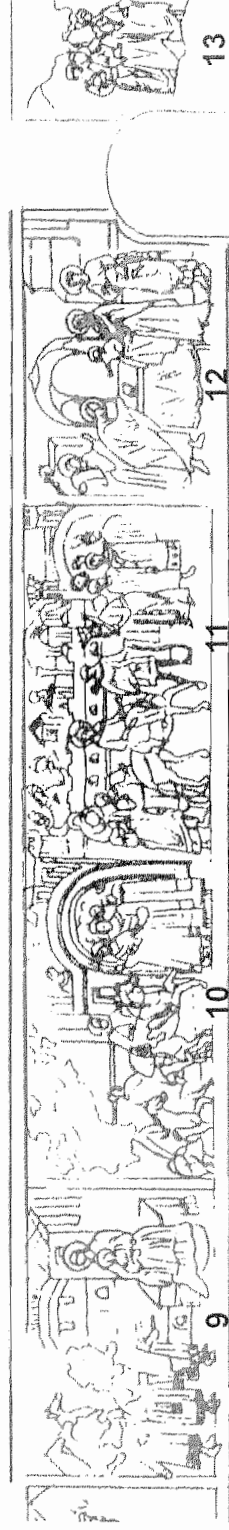
321. Stanza 24, Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-50 A.D.



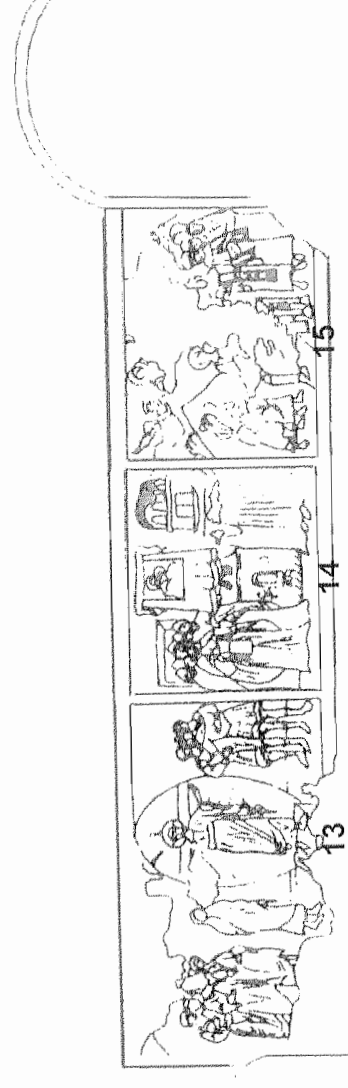
323. Matejce, Church of the Virgin, N. Wall of the Sanctuary (Stanzas 1-5), 1356-1360 A.D.



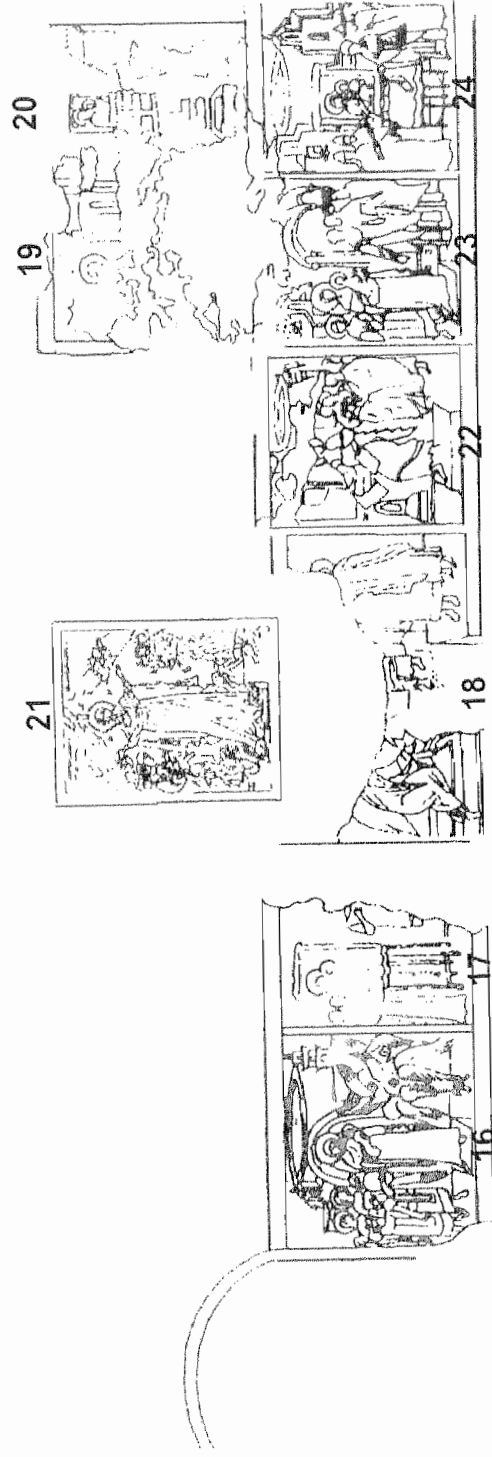
324. Matejce, Church of the Virgin, Apse (Stanzas 6-8), 1356-1360 A.D.



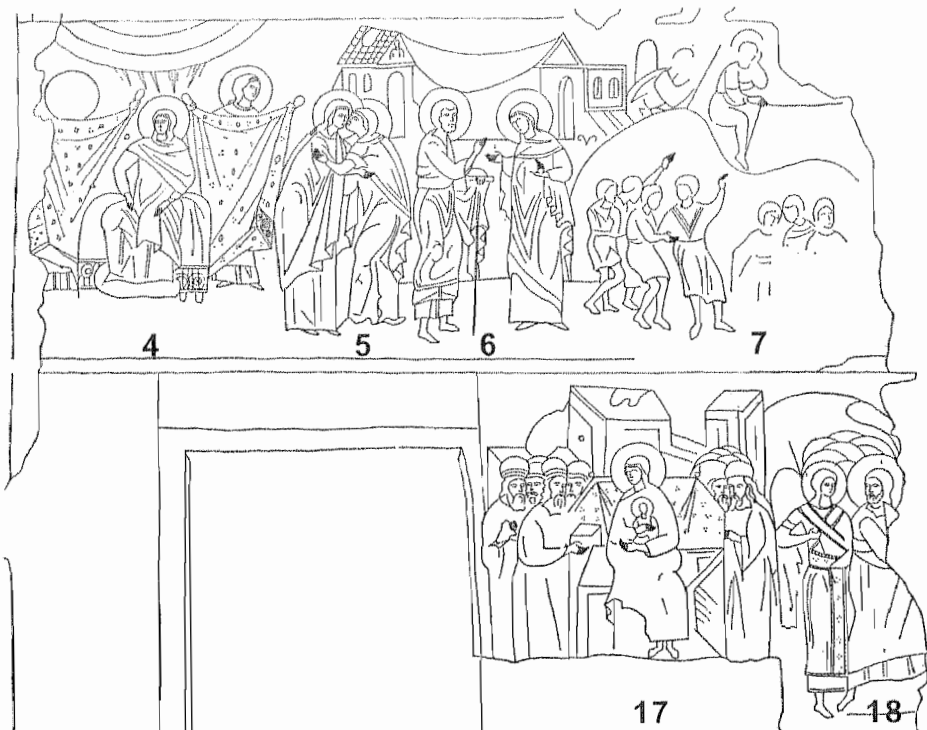
325. Matejce, Church of the Virgin, S. Wall of the Sanctuary (Stanzas 9-11) and S. part of the E. Wall of the Naos (Stanza 12 and part of 13), 1356-1360 A.D.



326. Matejce, Church of the Virgin, S. Wall of the Naos (Stanzas 13-15), 1356-1360 A.D.



327. Matejce, Church of the Virgin, S. Wall of the Naos (Stanzas 16-18 and 22), S. Wall of the Narthex (Stanzas 19-20 and 23-24); S. side of the SW Pillar (Stanza 21), 1356-1360 A.D.



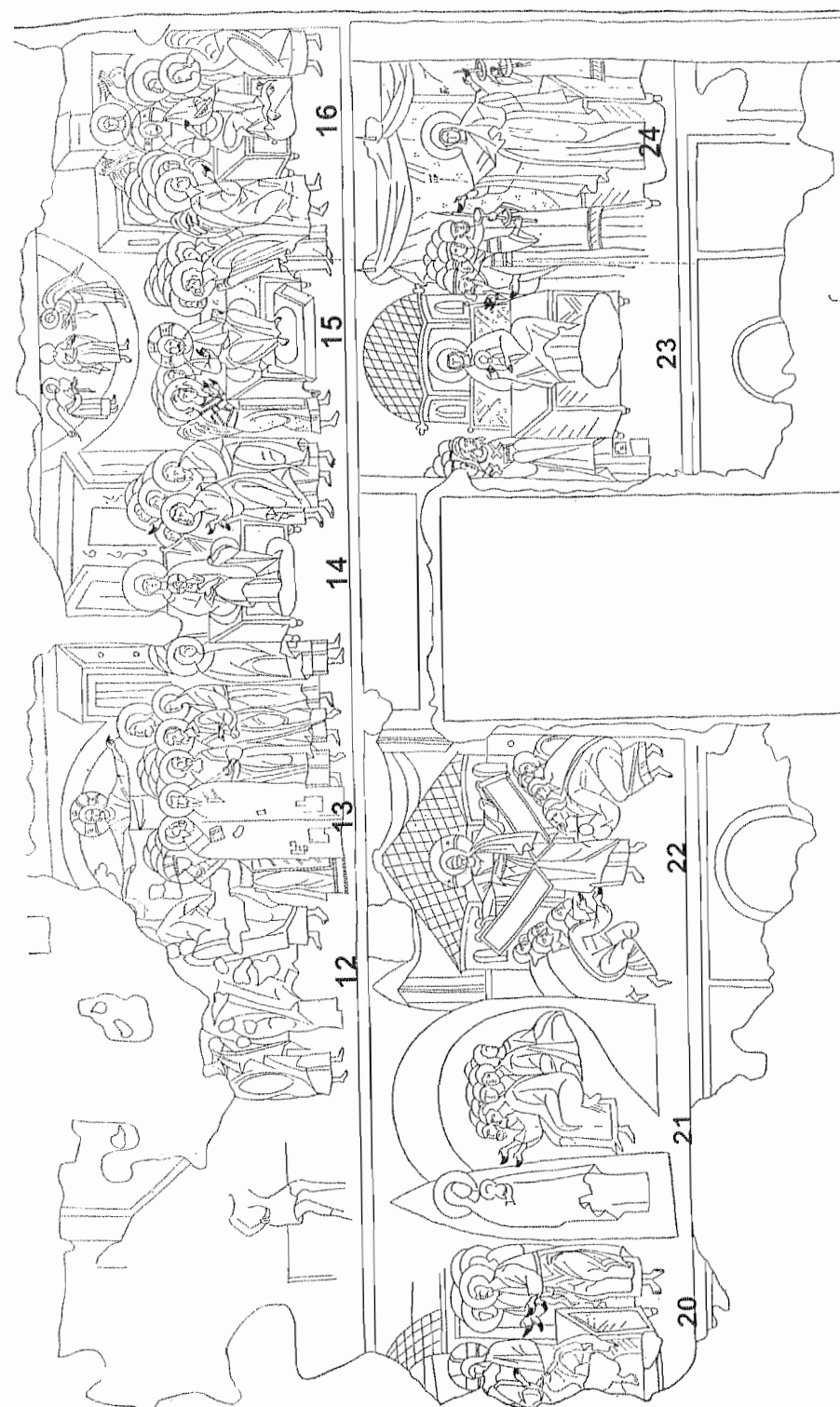
328. Peribleptos, Ochrid, N. façade, Oikoi 4-7 and 17-18, 1365 A.D.



329. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



330. Oikos 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



331. Peribleptos, Ochrid, N. façade, Oikoi 12-16 and 20-24, 1365 A.D.



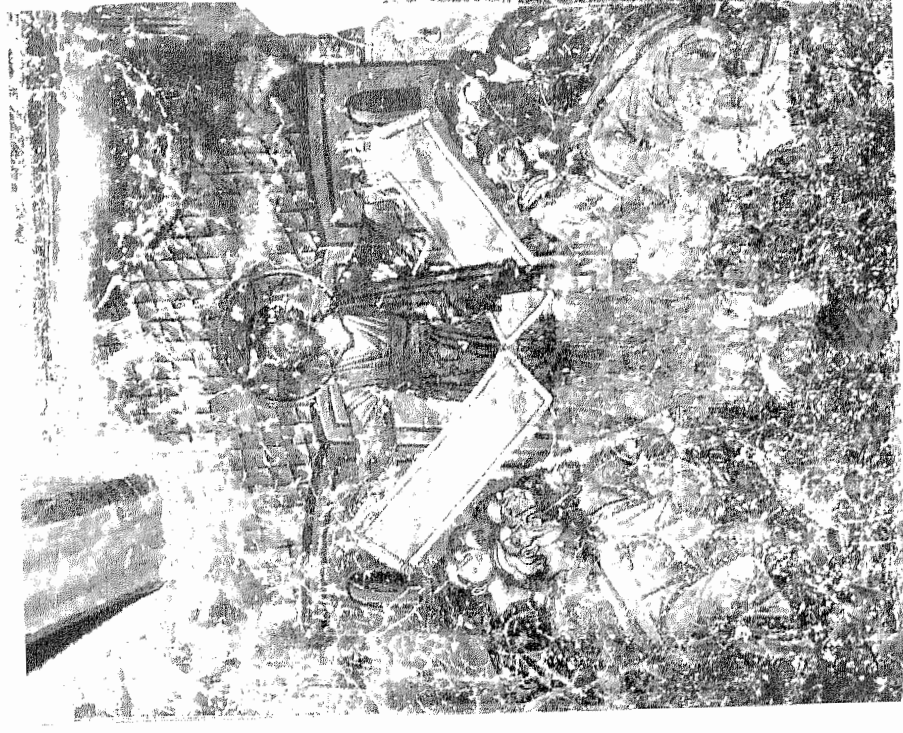
332. Oikos 13(14), The New Creation (The Strange Birth), Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



333. Oikos 14(13), The Strange Birth (The New Creation), Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



334. Oikos 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



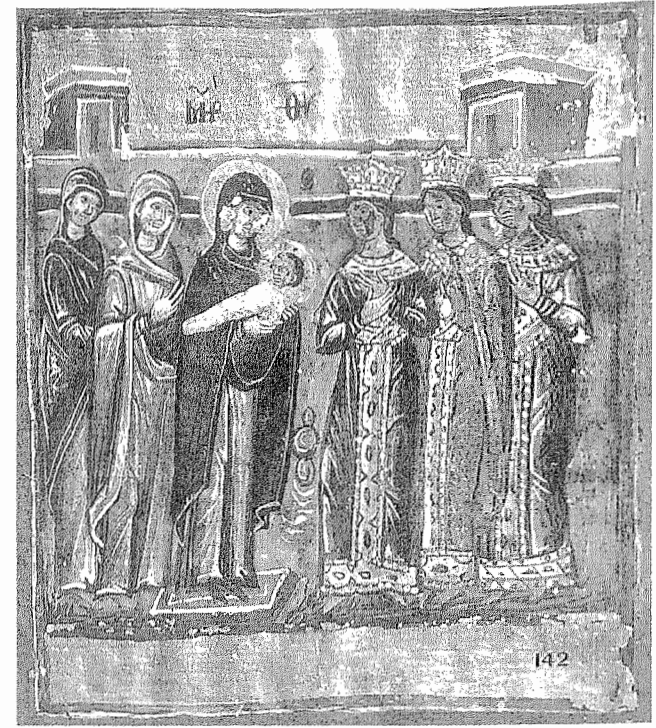
335. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



336. Oikos 17, The Voiceless Orators, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



337. Oikoi 23-24, Singing Your Giving Birth and the Offering of the Hymn, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



338. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter



339. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter



340. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter



341. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter



343. St. Paul of Thebes fed by a raven, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete, beginning of the 14th century



342. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Belgrade Psalter, 17th-century lost copy of the Serbian Psalter



344. Akathistos Icon with Koimesis, Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.

1 Annunciation	2 Annunciation	3 Annunciation	4 Conception	5 Visitation
22 Cancellation of Debts	KOIMESIS			6 Joseph's Doubts
21 Shining Lamp				7 Nativity
20 Offering of Odes				8 Journey of Magi
19 Defence of Virgins				9 Adoration of Magi
18 Salvation of World	23 Spiritual Temple	24 Presentation of the Hymn		10 Return of Magi
17 Voiceless Orators				11 Flight into Egypt
16 Astounded Angels	15 Double Nature	14 Strange Birth	13 New Creation	12 Hypapante

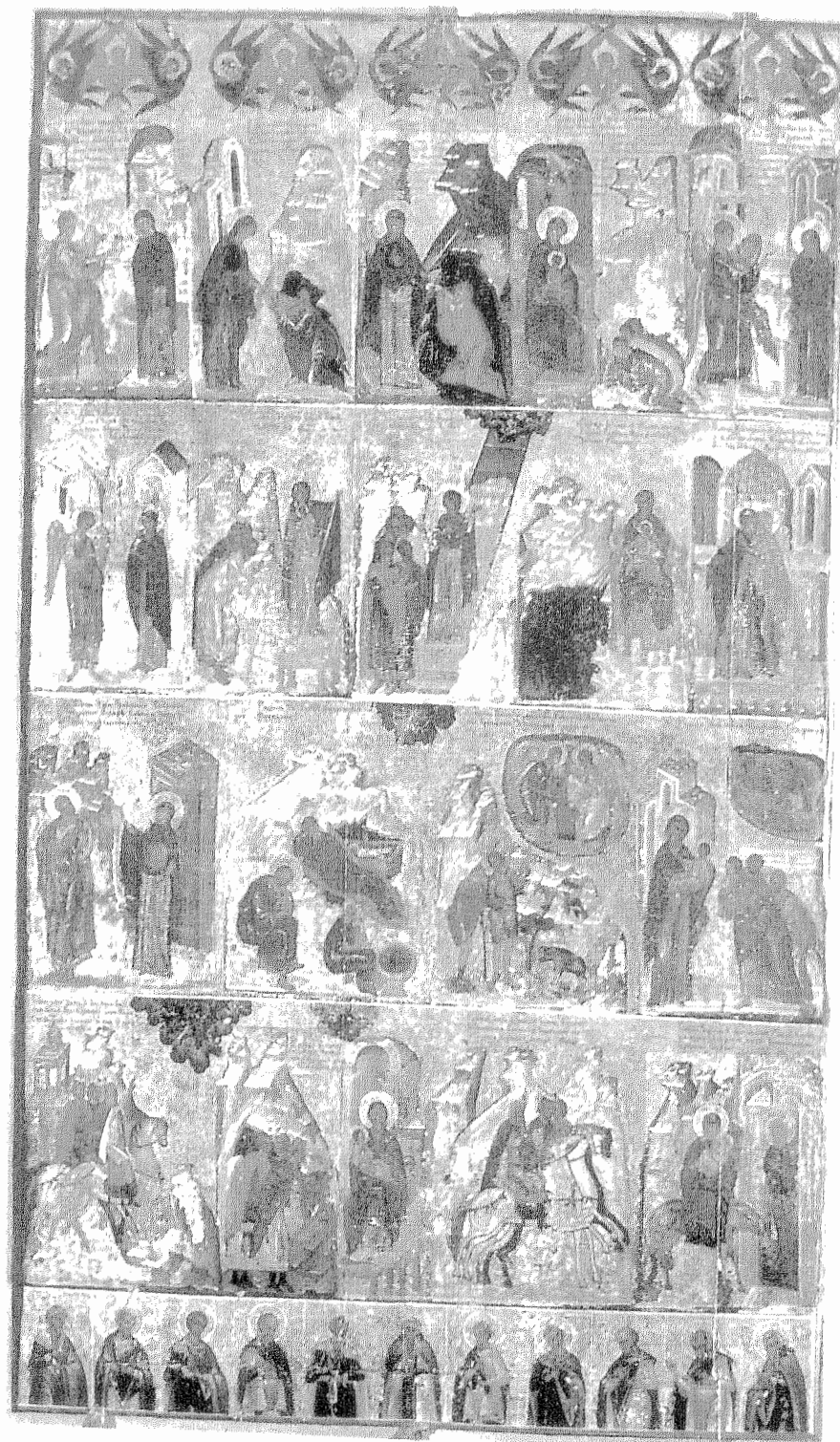
345. Arrangement of the oikoi in the Akathistos Icon with Koimesis in the Church of the Virgin Zoödochos Pigi at Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century.



346. Akathistos Icon no. 1065 with the Prophets from Above (*Pochvala Bogomateri*), Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.

1 Stanza 21 Ikos 11 Shining Lamp	2 Stanza 12 Kondak 7 Hypapante	3 Stanza 19 Ikos 10 Defence of the Virgins	4 Stanza 23 Ikos 12 Living Temple	5 Stanza 22 Kondak 22 Cancellation of Debts
6 Stanza 14 Kondak 8 Strange Birth	7 Stanza 13 Ikos 7 New Creation	8 Stanza 16 Kondak 9 Astounded Angels	9 Stanza 18 Kondak 10 Salvation of the World	10 Stanza 20 Kondak 11 Defeated Hymns
11 Stanza 15 Ikos 8 Double Nature	The Prophets from Above <i>Pochvala Bogomateri</i>			12 Stanza 17 Ikos 12 Voiceless Orators
13 Prooemion Kondak 1				14 Stanza 24 Kondak 13 Offering of the Hymn
15 Stanza 1 Ikos 1 Annunciation	16 Stanza 2 Kondak 2 Annunciation	17 Stanza 3 Ikos 2 Annunciation	18 Stanza 4 Kondak 3 Conception	19 Stanza 5 Ikos 3 Visitation
20 Stanza 6 Kondak 4 Doubts of Joseph	21 Stanza 7 Ikos 4 Adoration of Shepherds	22 Stanza 9 Ikos 5 Adoration of the Magi	23 Stanza 11 Ikos 6 Flight into Egypt	24 Stanza 8 Kondak 5 Journey of Magi
				25 Stanza 10 Kondak 6 Return of the Magi

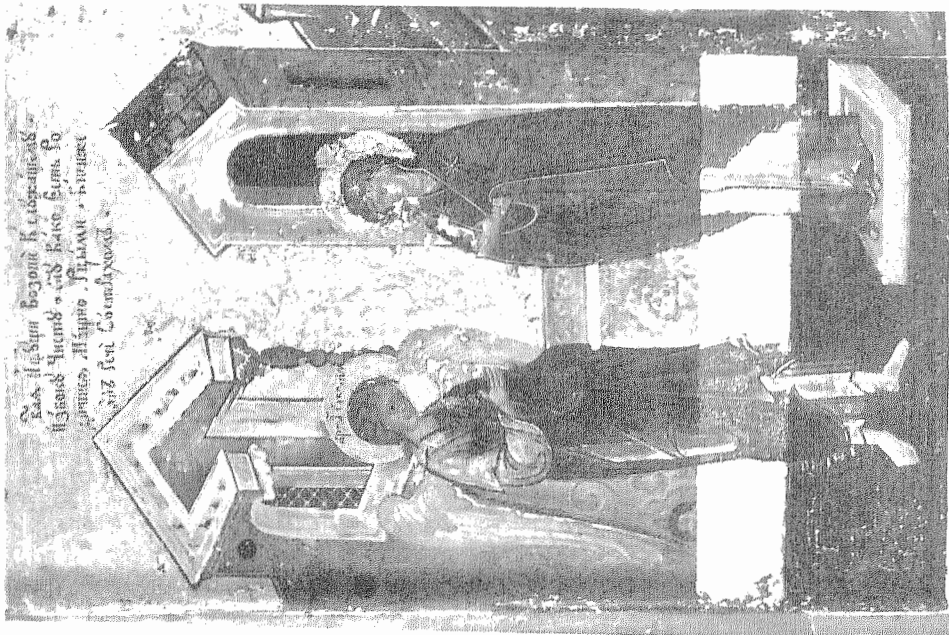
347. Arrangement of the stanzas in the Akathistos Icon no. 1065 with the Prophets from Above (*Pochvala Bogomateri*), Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow Kremlin, second half of the 14th century.



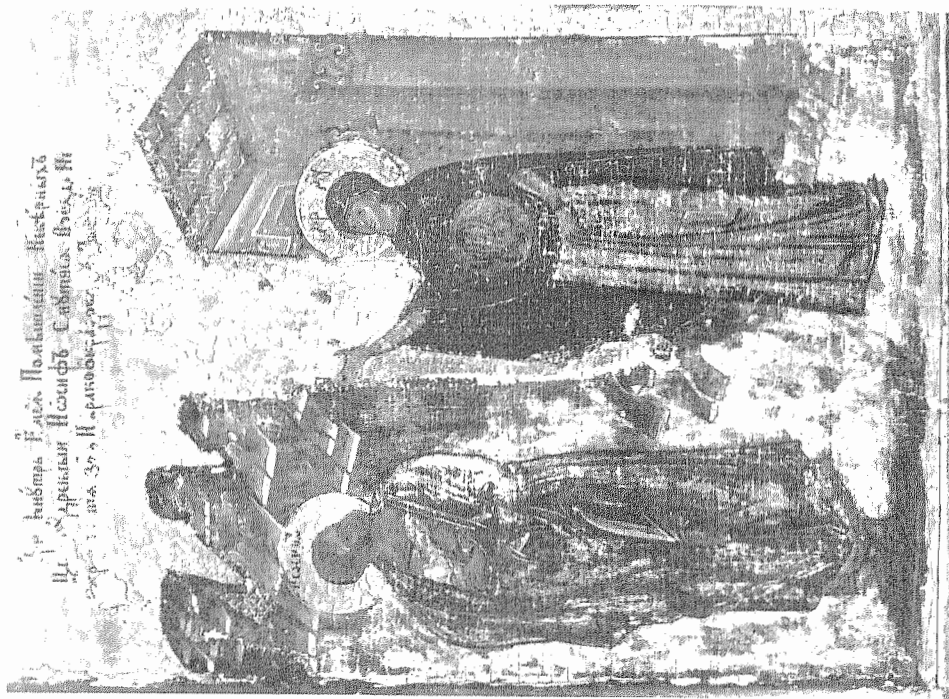
348. Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.

1 Stanza 1 Ikos 1 Annunciation	2 Stanza 1.1 Ikos 1.1 Redemption of Adam	3 Stanza 1.2 Ikos 1.2 Deliverence of Eve	4 Stanza 1.3 Ikos 1.3 The Throne of the King	5 Stanza 2 Kondak 2 Annunciation
6 Stanza 3 Ikos 2 Annunciation	7 Stanza 3.1 Ikos 2.1 Celestial Ladder	8 Stanza 3.2 Ikos 2.2 Bridge from Earth to Heaveb	9 Stanza 3.3 Ikos 2.3 Mysterious Mother of Light	10 Stanza 5 Ikos 3 Visitation
11 Stanza 6 Kondak 4 Joseph's Doubts	12 Stanza 7 Ikos 4 The Nativity	13 Stanza 7.1 Ikos 4.1 The Shepherds listening to the Angels	14 Stanza 7.2 Ikos 4.2 The Skies rejoice with the Earth	
15 Stanza 8 Kondak 5 The Journey of the Magi	16 Stanza 9 Ikos 5 The Adoration of the Magi	17 Stanza 10 Kondak 6 The Return of the Magi	18 Stanza 11 Ikos 6 The Flight into Egypt	

349. Arrangement of the stanzas in the Akathistos Icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



350. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Akathistos icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beg. of the 15th c.



351. Stanza 6, The Doubts of Joseph, Akathistos icon no. 3039, Kremlin Museums, Moscow, beginning of the 15th century.



355. Stanza 1, Annunciation at the Well, Cozia



353. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Angel sent from Heaven, Serbian Psalter



352. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Angel sent from Heaven, Tomic Psalter



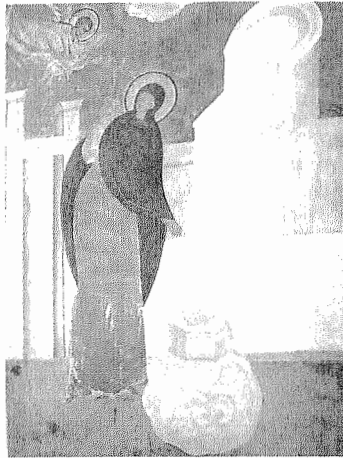
354. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Angel sent from Heaven, Skopelos Icon



356. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Marko



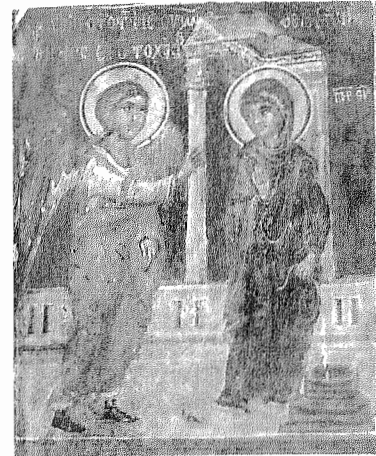
357. Stanza 1, Uspenskiy Icon



358. Stanza 2, St. Ferapont



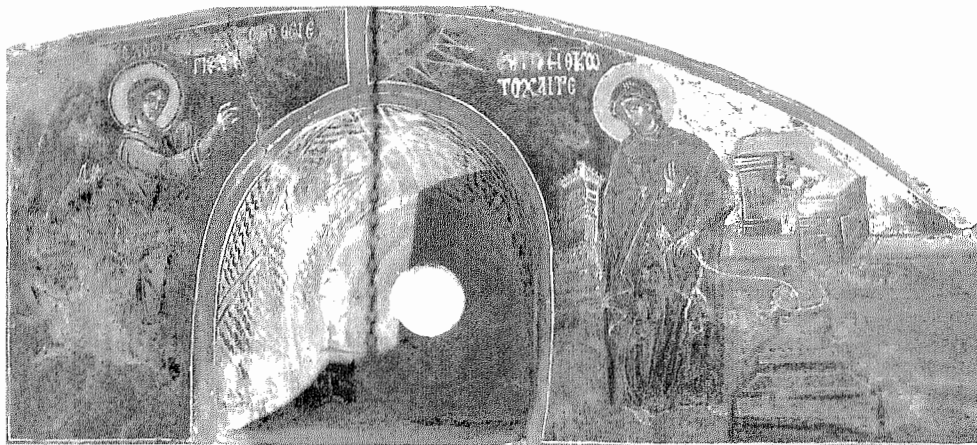
359. Stanza 3, Matejce



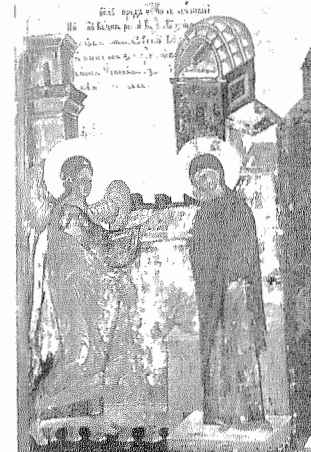
362. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Roustika



363. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko



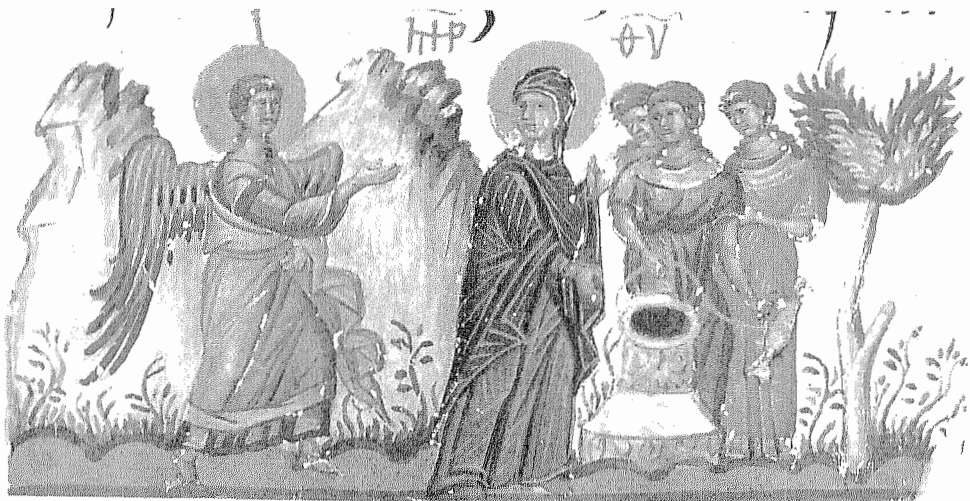
360. Stanza 1, Annunciation at the Well, Panagia, Meronas, Amari, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.



364. Stanza 1, Kremlin Icon, Moscow



365. Stanza 1, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, Escorial



361. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 282vo, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



366. Stanza 1, Annunciation, St. Ferapont



367. Oikos 1, Annunciation, MS. Synodal gr. 429



368. Oikos 1, Annunciation, Valsamonero



369. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Roustika



373. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Marko, 1376-81 A.D.



374. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Synodal gr. 429



370. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Meronas, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.



371. Stanza 2, Matejce, 1356-60



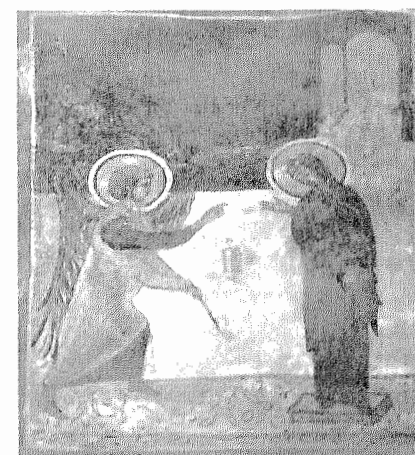
375. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Elasson



376. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, Escorial



372. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



377. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Cozia



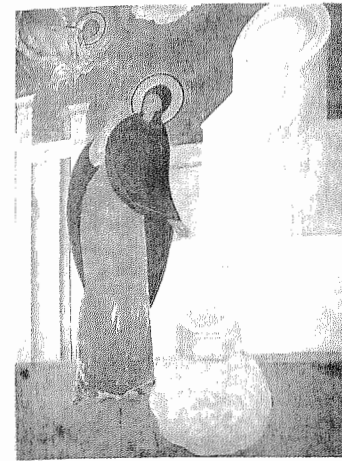
378. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



379. Stanza 2, Kremlin Icon



380. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Uspenskij Icon



385. Stanza 2, St. Ferapont



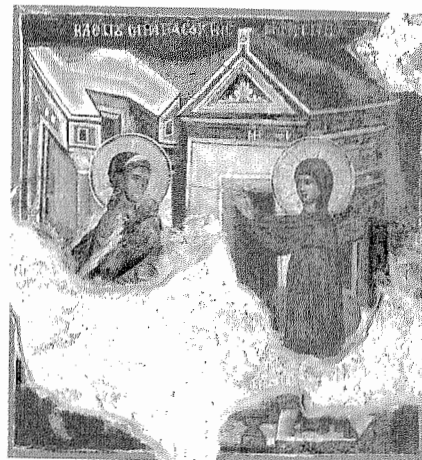
386. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Marko



387. Stanza 3, Matejce



381. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Serbian Psalter



382. Oikos 2, Annunciation, Valsamonero



388. Stanza 3, Annunciation at the Well, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



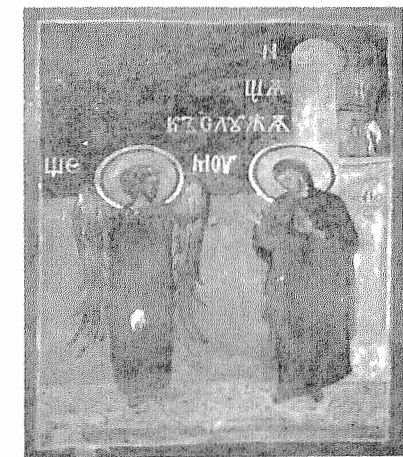
383. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Kavousi



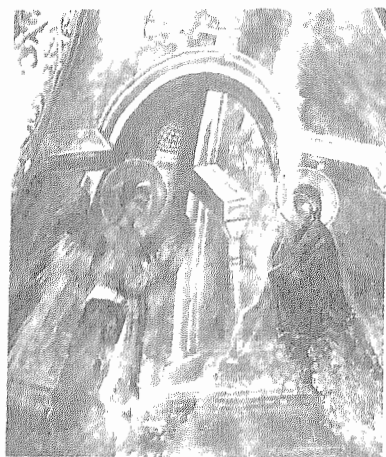
384. Stanza 2, Annunciation, Skopelos Icon



389. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Serbian Psalter



390. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Cozia



391. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Decani



392. Stanza 3, Annunciation, Uspenskij Icon



397. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Codex R.I. 19, Escorial



398. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Elasson



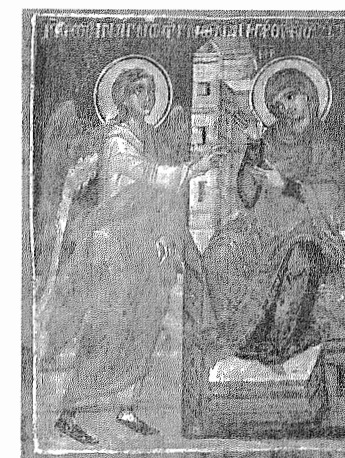
393. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Panagia, Meronas, Amari



394. Stanza 3, Kremlin Icon



399. Oikos 3, Annunciation, MS. Synodal gr. 429



400. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Roustika



395. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Valsamonero



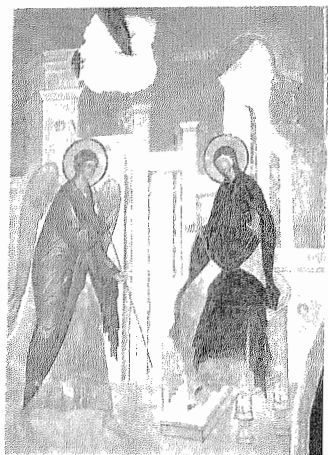
396. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Kavousi



401. Oikos 3, Annunciation, Skopelos Icon



402. Stanza 4, Conception, Uspenskij Icon



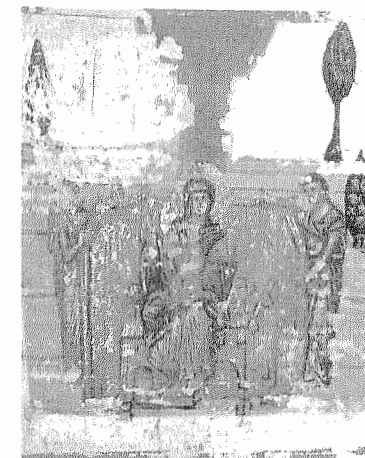
403. Stanza 4, Conception, Ferapont



404. Oikos 4, Conception of Christ, Codex R.I. 19, Escorial



408. Oikos 4, Conception, Skopelos Icon



409. Stanza 4, Conception, Serbian Psalter



405. Stanza 4, Conception, Cozia



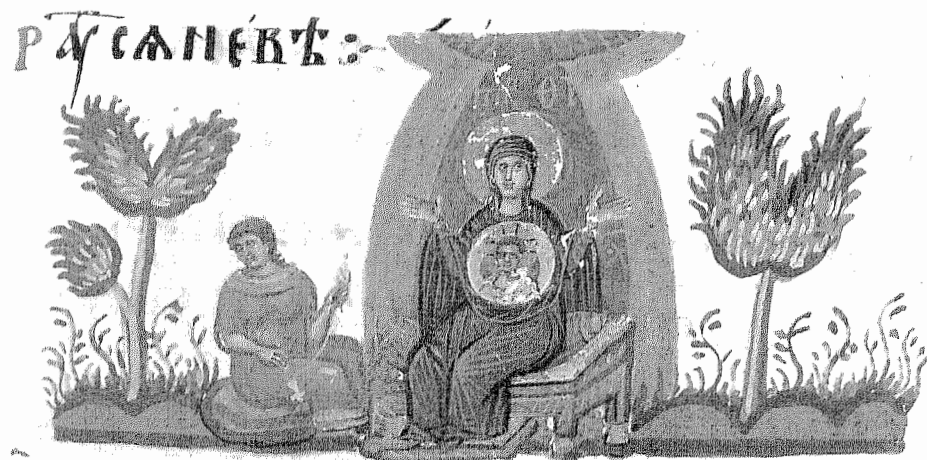
406. Oikos 4, Conception of Christ, Synodal gr. 429



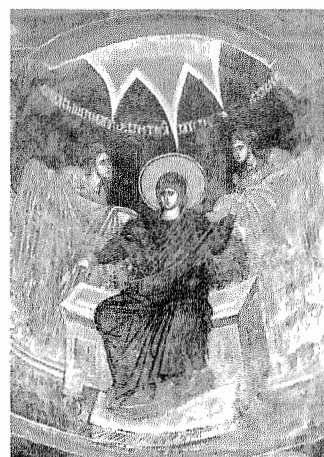
410. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Decani



411. Stanza 4, Conception, Matejce



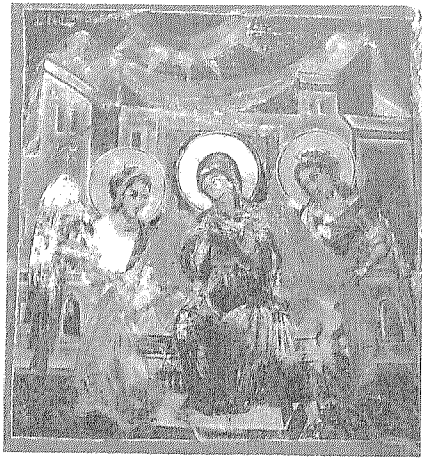
407. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow



412. Stanza 4, The Conception of Christ, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



413. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



414. Oikos 4, Conception, Valsamonero



415. Oikos 4, Conception, Kavousi



420. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Synodal gr. 429



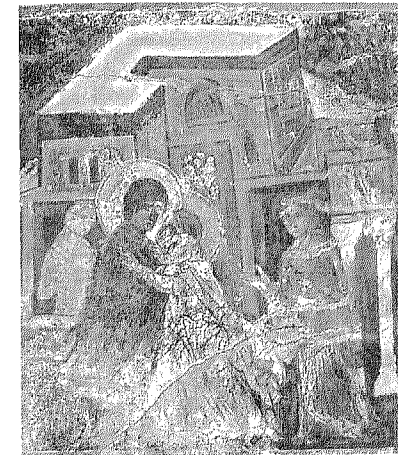
421. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Codex R.I. 19, Escorial



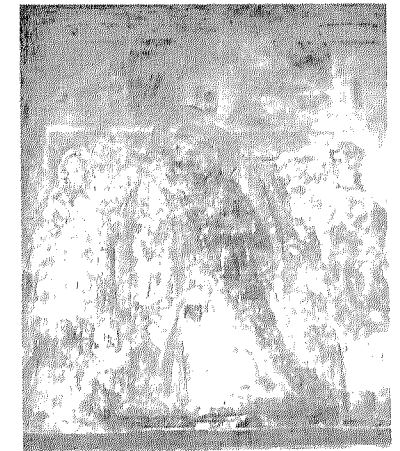
416. Oik. 4, Conception, Elasson



417. Oikos 4, The Conception of Christ, Panagia, Meronas, Amari



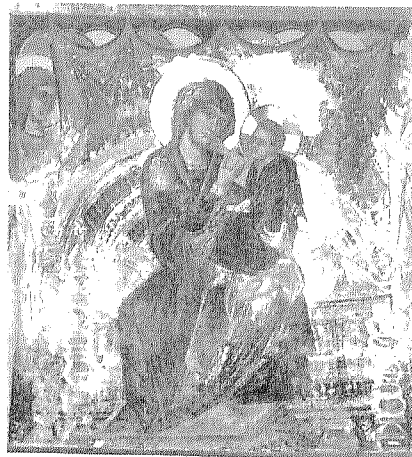
422. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Valsamonero



423. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Matejce



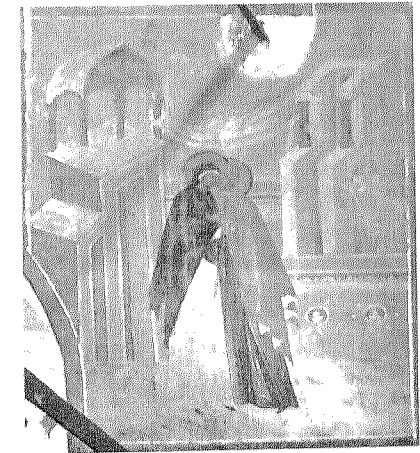
418. Oikos 4, Conception, Roustika



419. Oikos 13, New Creation, Hodegetria



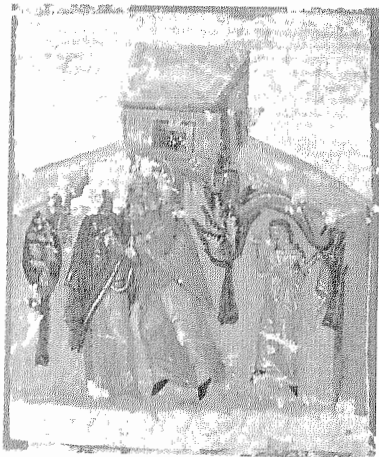
424. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Uspenskij Icon



425. Stanza 5, The Visitation, St. Ferapont



426. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



427. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Serbian Psalter



428. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Roustika



429. Oikos 5, Ochrid



430. Stanza 5, The Visitation, Cozia



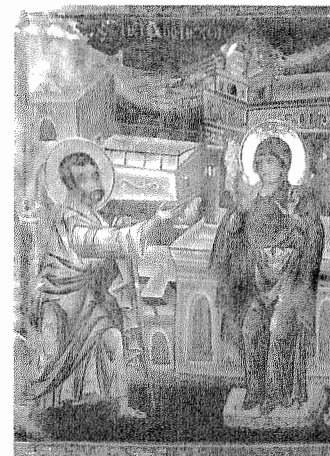
431. Stanza 5, Kremlin Icon



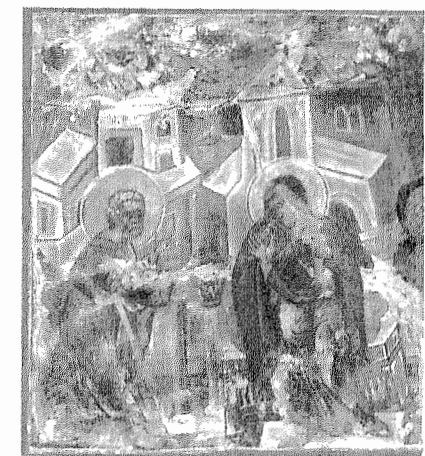
432. Oikos 5, The Visitation, Skopelos Icon



433. Stanza 6, Joseph's Doubts, Cozia



434. Oikos 6, Joseph's Doubts, Hodegetria



435. Oikos 6, Joseph's Doubts, Valsamonero



436. Oikos 6, Joseph's Doubts, Roustika



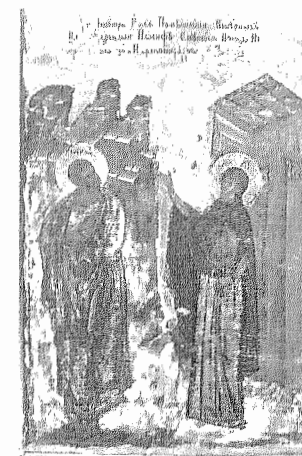
437. Oikos 6, Joseph's Doubts, Orphanos



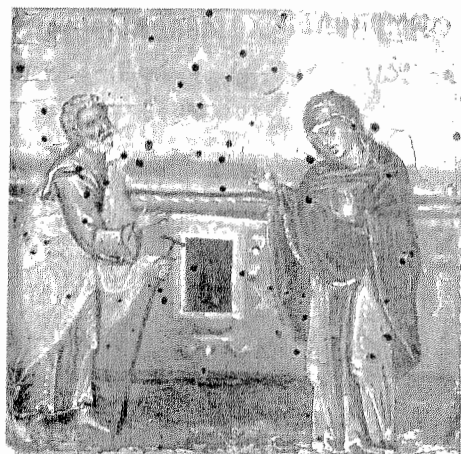
438. Stanza 6, Joseph's Doubts, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360



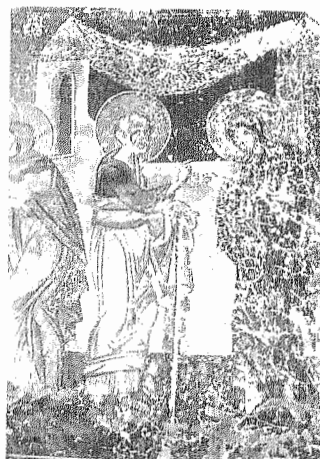
443. Stanza 6, Joseph's Doubts, Marko



444. Stanza 6, Joseph's Doubts, Kremlin Icon



439. Oikos 6, Joseph's Doubts, Skopelos Icon



440. Oikos 6, Joseph's Doubts, Ochrid



445. Oikos 6, Joseph's Doubts, Synodal gr. 429



446. Oikos 6, Joseph's Doubts, Codex R.I.19, Escorial



441. Stanza 6, Joseph's Doubts, Uspenskij Icon



442. Stanza 6, Joseph's Doubts, Matejce



447. Stanza 6, Joseph's Doubts, St. Ferapont Monastery



448. Stanza 6, Joseph's Doubts, Serbian Psalter



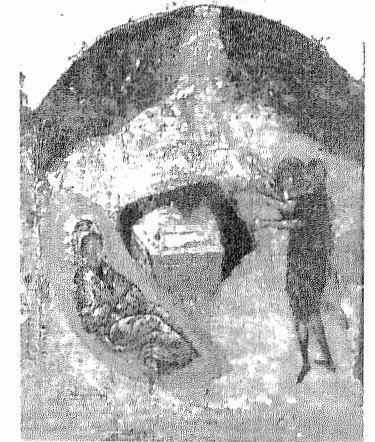
449. Stanza 7, The shepherds heard the angels, Kremlin Icon



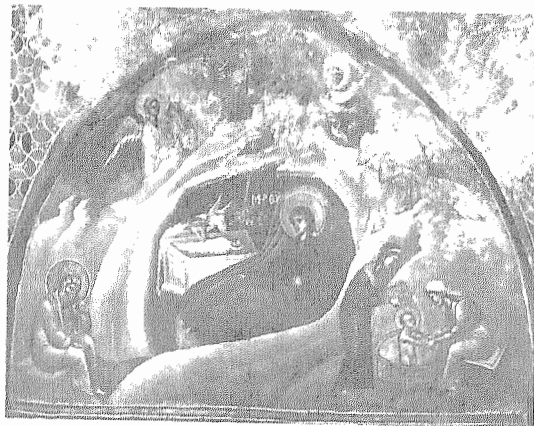
450. Oikos 7, Nativity - the Adoration of the Shepherds, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



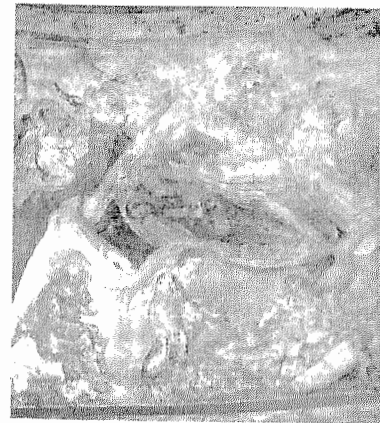
455. Oikos 7, Shepherds, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



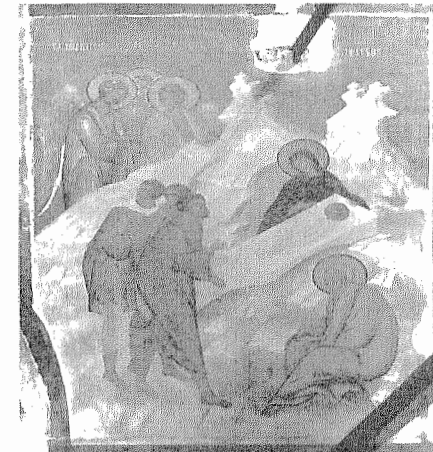
456. Stanza 7, Adoration of Shepherds, Uspenskij Icon



451. Stanza 7, Nativity - the shepherds heard the angels singing, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-50



452. Stanza 7, Nativity - the shepherds heard the angels singing, Matejce



457. Stanza 7, Adoration of Shepherds, Ferapont



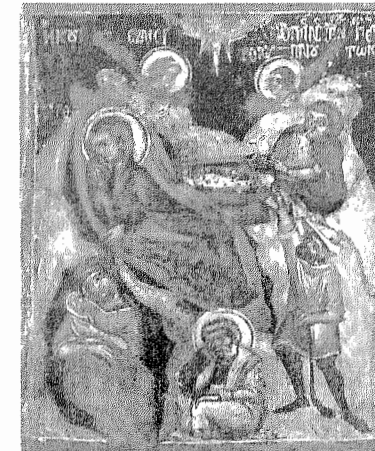
458. Stanza 7, Adoration of Shepherds, Cozia



453. Oikos 7, Nativity - The shepherds heard the angels singing, MS. Synodal gr. 429



454. Oikos 7, Nativity - the shepherds heard the angels singing, Codex R.I.19, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



459. Oikos 7, Adoration of Shepherds, Roustika



460. Oikos 7, Adoration of Shepherds, Skopelos Icon



461. Stanza 7, The Adoration of the Shepherds, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



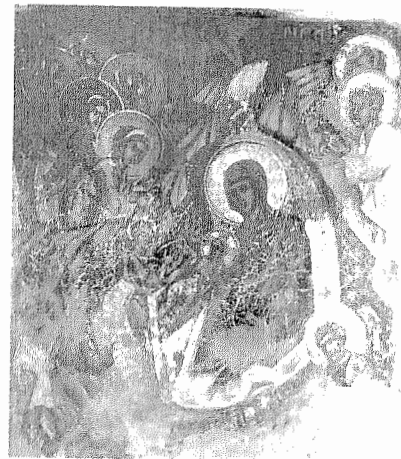
466. Stanza 7, The Nativity of Christ, Marko, 1376-81



467. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Orphanos



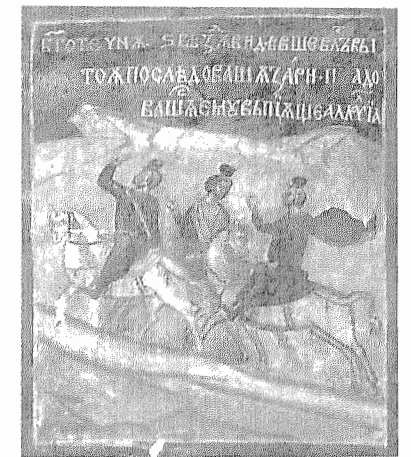
462. Oikos 7, Adoration of Shepherds, Valsamonero



463. Oikos 7, Adoration of Shepherds, Hodgetria



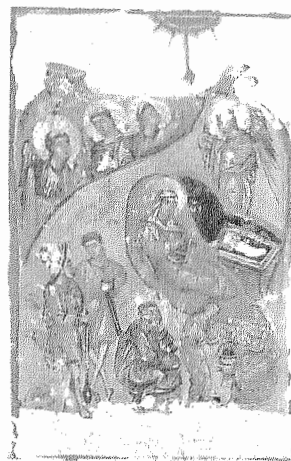
468. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Synodal gr. 429



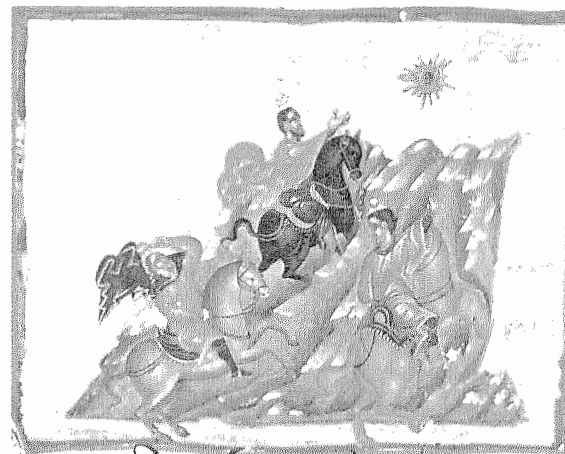
469. Stanza 8, Journey of the Magi, Cozia



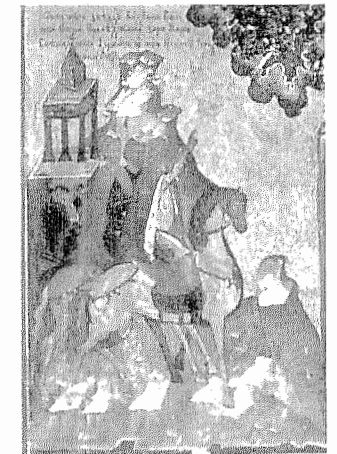
464. Oikos 7, Nativity, Adoration of the Shepherds, Kavousi



465. Stanza 7, Serbian Psalter



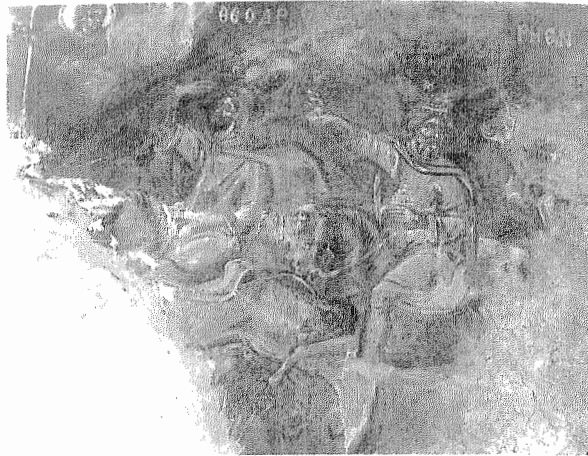
470. Oikos 8, Journey of the Magi, Codex R.I.19, Escorial



471. Stanza 8, Kremlin Icon



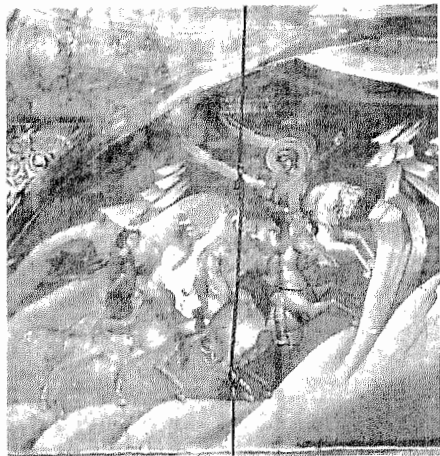
472. Oikos 8, Journey of Magi, Roustlika



473. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Panagia, Meronas



478. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow



474. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Decani



475. Oikos 8, The Journey of the Magi, Skopelos Icon



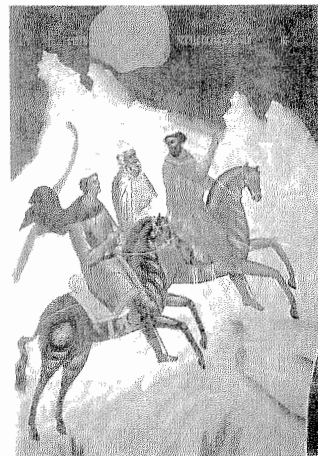
479. Stanza 8, The Journey of the Magi, Matejce, 1356-60



480. Stanza 8, Uspenskiy Ikon



476. Stanza 8, Journey of the Magi, St. Demetrius, Marko



477. Stanza 8, St. Ferapont



481. Stanza 8, Journey of the Magi, Serbian Psalter



482. Oikos 8, Journey of Magi, Valsamonero



483. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow



488. Stanza 9, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



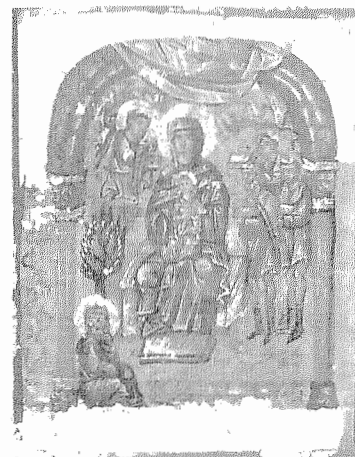
489. Stanza 9, Adoration of the Magi, Marko, 1376-1381



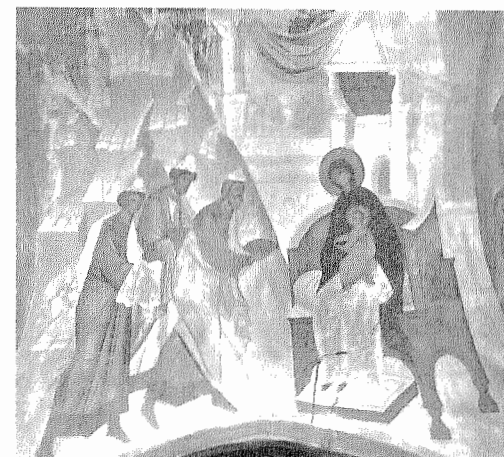
484. Oikos 9, Adoration of the Magi, Skopelos Icon



485. Oikos 9, Roustika, 1390-1391



490. Stanza 9, Serbian Psalter



491. Stanza 9, Adoration of the Magi, St. Ferapont



486. Stanza 9, The Adoration of the Magi, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



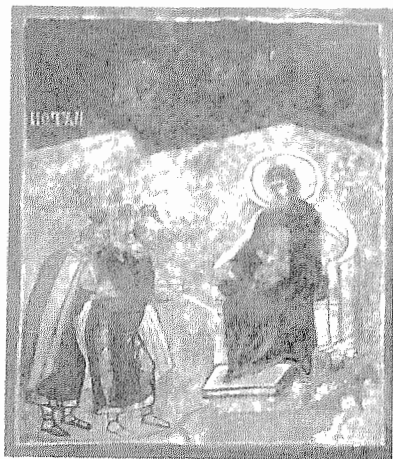
487. Oikos 9, The Adoration of the Magi, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



492. Stanza 9, Kremlin Icon



493. Stanza 9, Uspenskij Icon



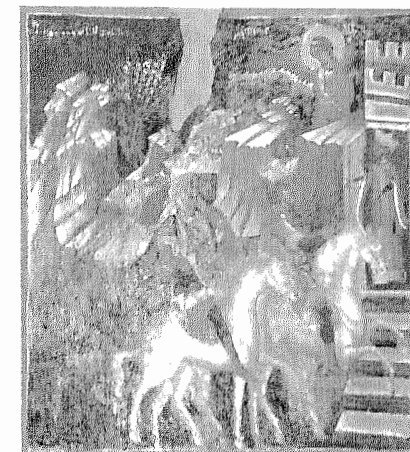
494. Stanza 9, Cozia, ca. 1390 A.D.



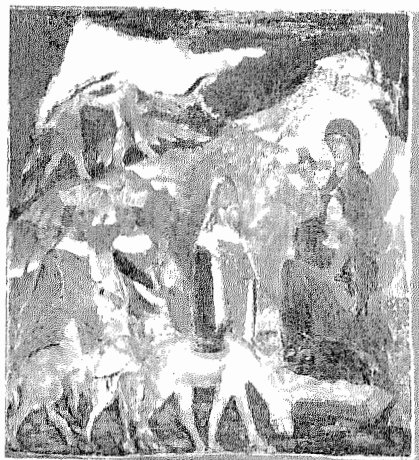
495. Oikos 9, Adoration of the Magi, Synodal gr. 429



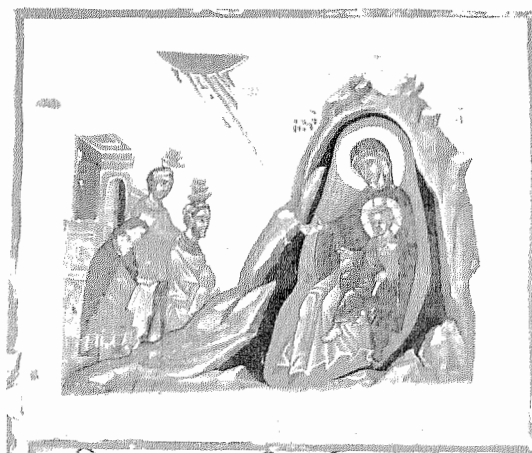
500. Stanza 10, Kremlin Icon



501. Oikos 10, Valsamonero, ca. 1430 A.D.



496. Oikos 9, Valsamonero, ca. 1430 A.D.



497. Oikos 9, Adoration of the Magi, Escorial



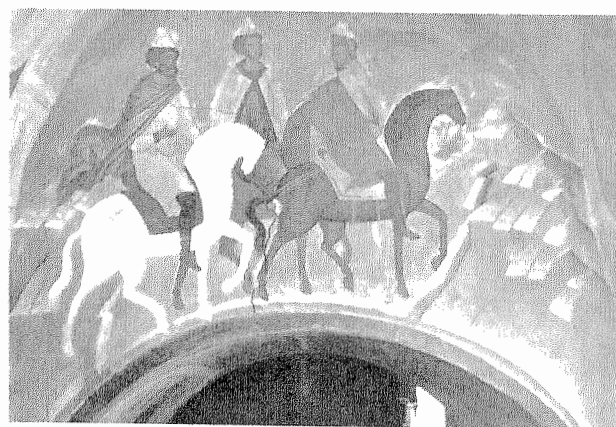
502. Stanza 10, Cozia, ca. 1390



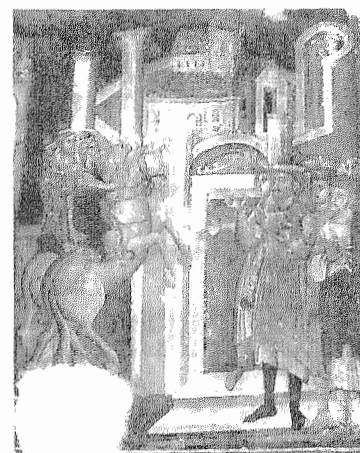
503. Oikos 10, Return of the Magi to Babylon, Roustika



498. Stanza 10, Uspenskij Icon



499. Stanza 10, Return of the Magi to Babylon, St. Ferapont



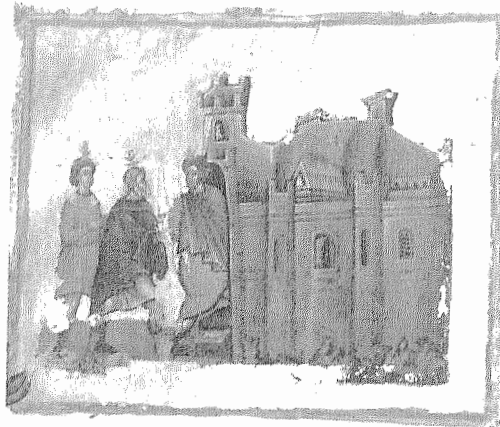
504. Oikos 10, St. Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315



505. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



506. Stanza 10, Return of the Magi, Matejce



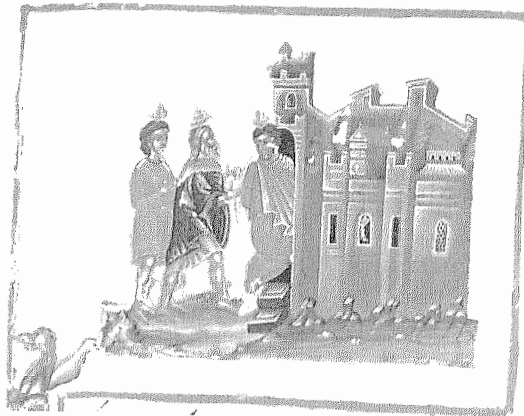
507. Oikos 10, Return of the Magi to Babylon, Synodal



511. Stanza 10, Return of the Magi to Babylon, Serbian Psalter, Munich, last quarter 14th century



508. Oikos 10, Skopelos Icon



509. Oikos 10, Return of the Magi to Babylon, Escorial



512. Stanza 10, Return of the Magi to Babylon, Marko, 1376-81



513. Stanza 11, Serbian Psalter, Munich



510. Stanza 10, The Return of the Magi to Babylon, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 287ro, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



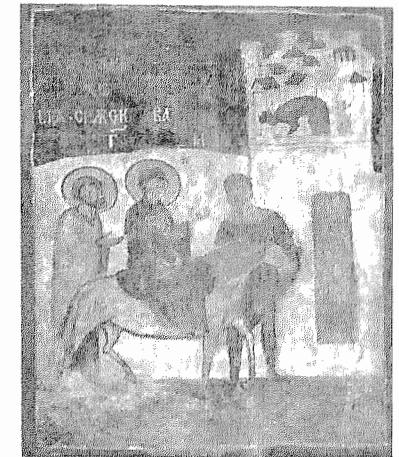
514. Stanza 11, The Flight into Egypt, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, fol. 287vo, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



515. Oikos 11, The Flight into Egypt, Panagia Church, Roustika, Rethymnon, Crete, 1390-1391 A.D.



520. Stanza 11, Flight into Egypt, St. Ferapont, 1500-1502



521. Stanza 11, Flight into Egypt, Cozia



516. Stanza 11, Flight into Egypt, Decani, 1348-50



517. Stanza 11, Flight into Egypt, Matejce, 1356-60



522. Oikos 11, Panagia *ton Chalkeon*, Thessaloniki



523. Oikos 11, Flight into Egypt, Valsamonero



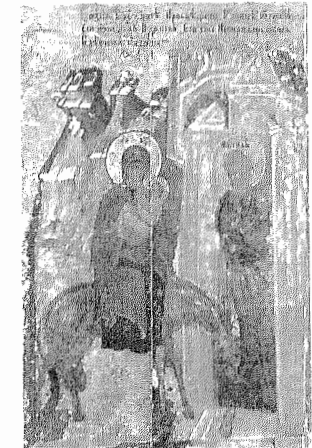
518. Stanza 11, Flight into Egypt, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



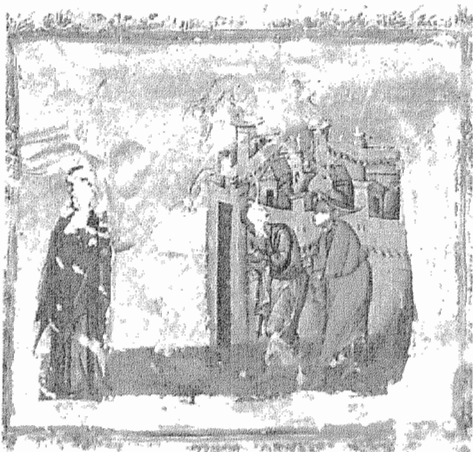
519. Stanza 11, Uspenskij Icon



524. Oikos 11, Flight into Egypt, Skopelos Icon



525. Stanza 11, Kremlin Icon



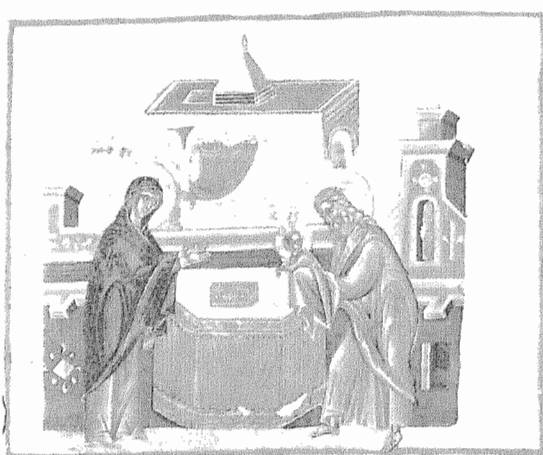
526. Oikos 11, *Flashing the light of truth in Egypt*, MS. Synodal gr. 429, ca. 1360 A.D.



527. Oikos 11, *Flashing the light of truth in Egypt*, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 15ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



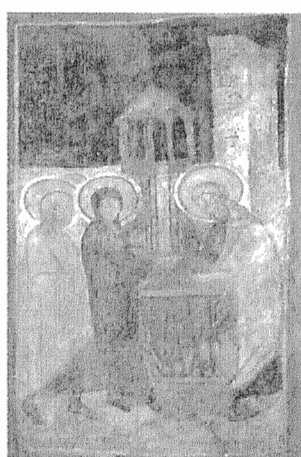
528. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Skopelos Icon



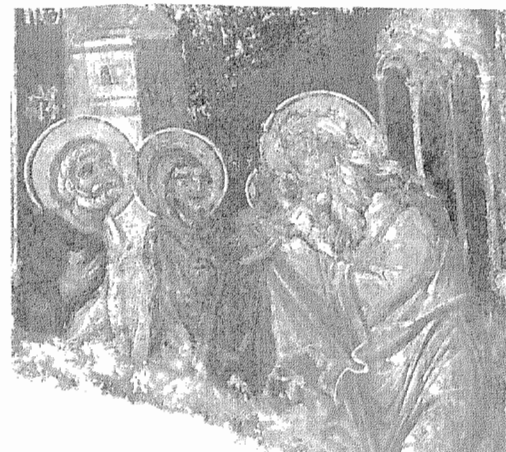
529. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



530. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Synodal gr. 429



531. Stanza 12, Cozia, ca. 1390



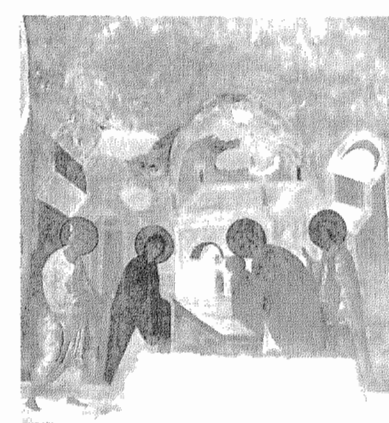
532. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Roustika, 1390-1391 A.D.



533. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Valsamonero



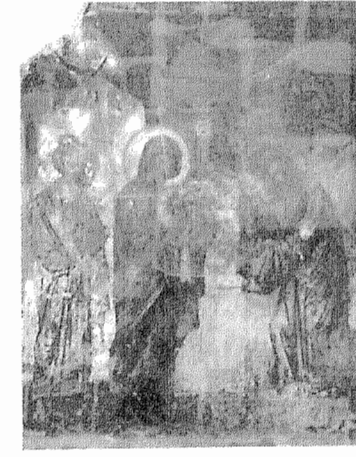
534. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Meronas, ca. 1400 A.D.



535. Stanza 12, Hypapante, St. Ferapont



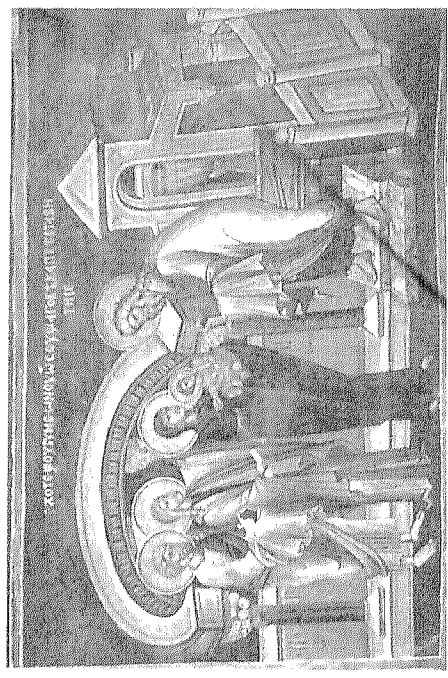
536. Stanza 12, Hypapante, Uspenskij Icon



537. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Hodegetria



538. Oikos 12, Hypapante, Panagia ton Chalkeon



539. Stanza 12, Hypapante, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-50 A.D.



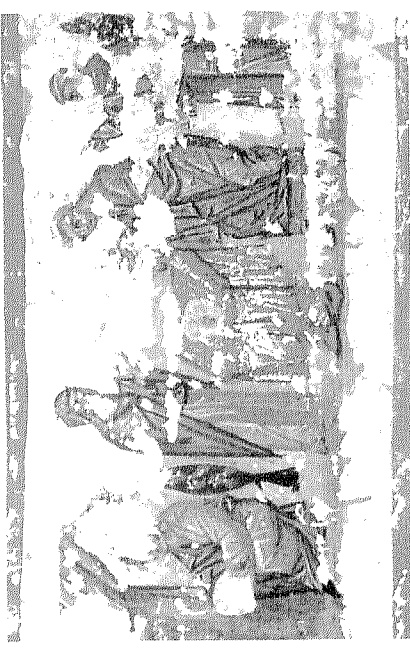
540. Stanza 12, Hypapante, Matejce, 1356-60 A.D.



541. Stanza 12, Hypapante, St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-81 A.D.



542. Stanza 12, Hypapante, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, f. 288v, Moscow, ca. 1360



543. Stanza 12, Hypapante, Serbian Psalter, Munich



544. Stanza 13, New Creation, Tomic Psalter, Moscow, ca. 1360



545. Oikos 13, New Creation, Esorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



546. Oikos 13, New Creation, Synodal gr. 429, 1360



547. Oikos 13, New Creation, Skopelos Icon



548. Oikos 13, New Creation, Panagia, Roustika, Rethymnon, 1390-1391 A.D.



549. Oikos 14(13), Strange Birth (New Creation), Valsamonero, ca. 1430



550. Stanza 14(13), Strange Birth (New Creation), Peribleptos, Ochrid, 1365



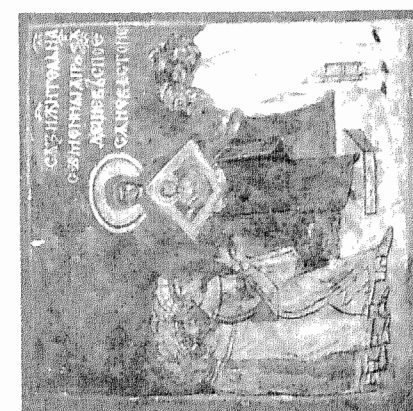
551. Stanza 13, New Creation, Serbian Psalter, Munich



554. Stanza 13, New Creation, St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



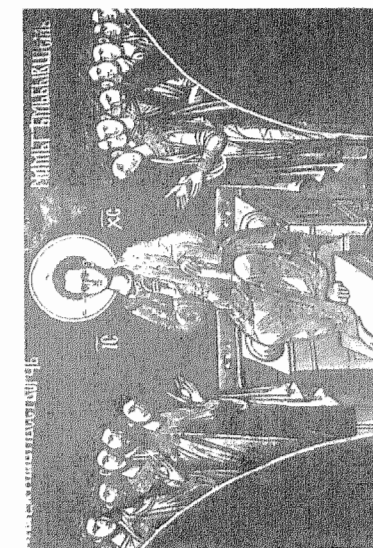
553. Oikos 13, New Creation, Panagia ton Chalkeon, Thessaloniki, ca. 1315 A.D.



552. Stanza 13, New Creation, Katholikon of the H. Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390



557. Stanza 13, New Creation, Church of the Virgin, Matejce, 1356-1360 A.D.



556. Stanza 13, New Creation, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



555. Oikos 13(4) New Creation (Conception of Christ), Hodegetria



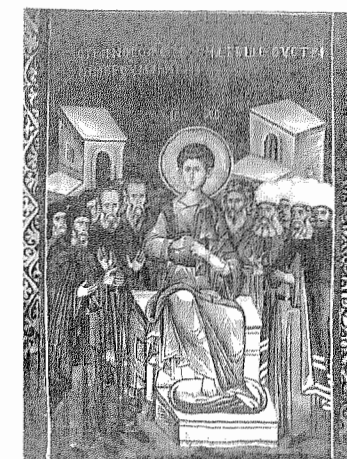
558. Stanza 13, New Creation, Uspenskij Ikon



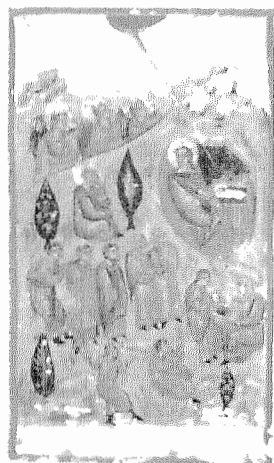
559. Oikos 14, Strange Birth, Synodal gr. 429, ca. 1360



563. Oikos 14, Strange Birth, Skopelos Ikon



564. Stanza 14, Strange Birth, Decani



560. Stanza 14, Serbian Psalter



561. Oikos 14, Nativity - Strange Birth, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



565. Oikos 14, Strange Birth, St. Nicholas Orphanos, ca. 1315



566. Stanza 14, Strange Birth, Cozia



562. Stanza 14, Nativity - The Strange Birth, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



567. Stanza 14, Strange Birth, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



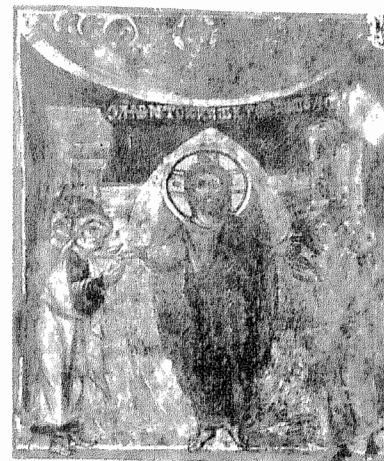
568. Stanza 14, Strange Birth, Matejce



569. Oikos 13(14), New Creation (Strange Birth), Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



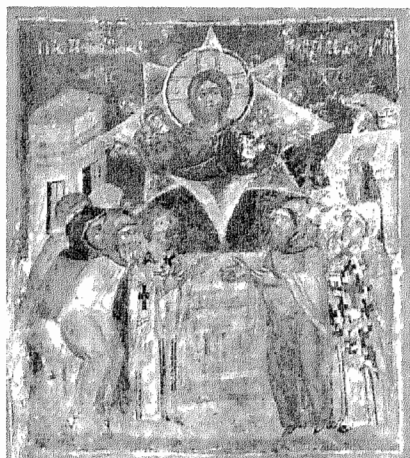
570. Oikos 13(14), New Creation (Strange Birth), Valsamonero, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



575. Oikos 15, Double Nature, Roustika



576. Oikos 15, Double Nature, Valsamonero



571. Oikos 16(14), Astounded Angels (Strange Birth), Roustika, 1390-91 A.D.



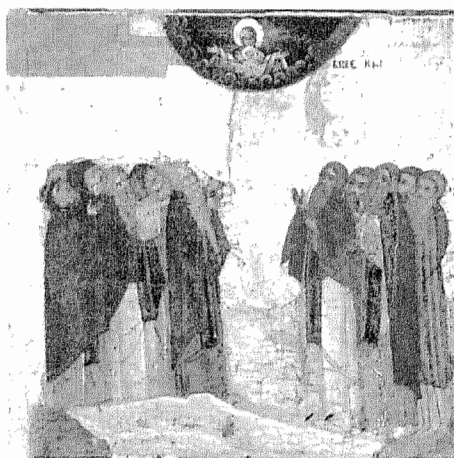
572. Oikos 14, Strange Birth, Monastery of the Hodegetria, Kainourgion, Crete



577. Oikos 15, Double Nature, Hodegetria



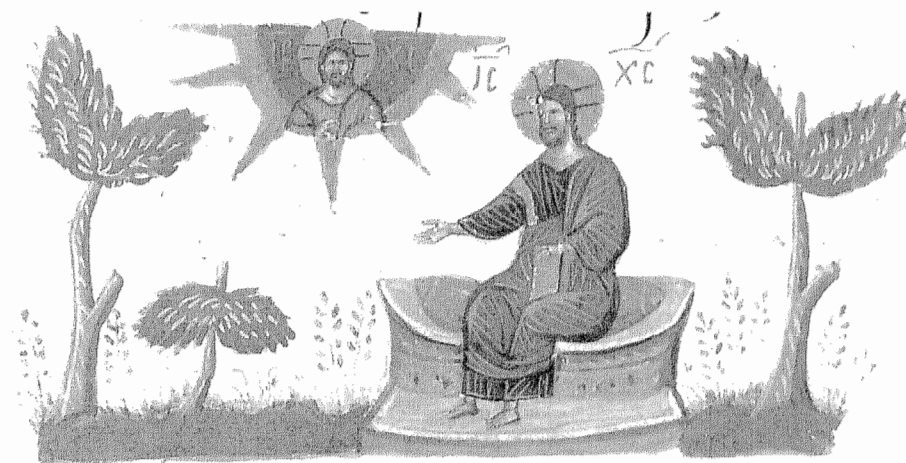
578. Stanza 15, Double Nature, Decani



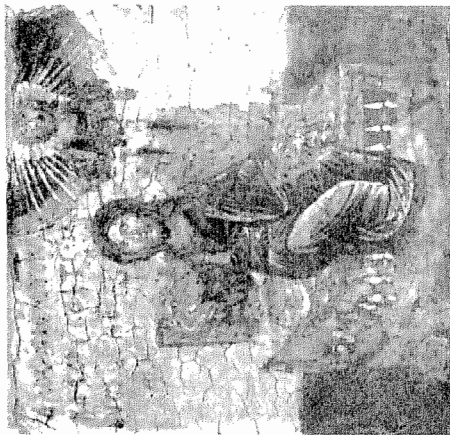
573. Stanza 14, Strange Birth, Uspenskij Icon



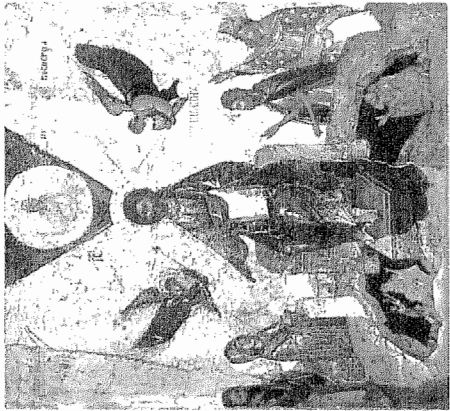
574. Oikos 15, Double Nature, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



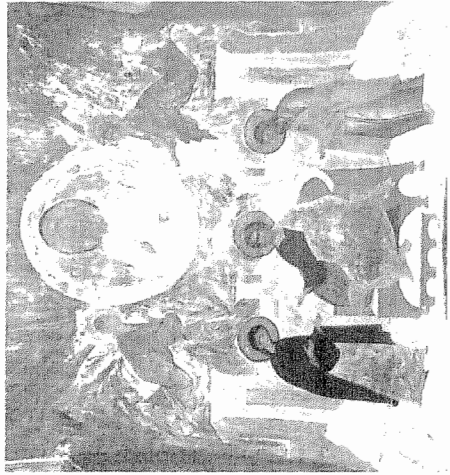
579. Stanza 15, The Double Nature of Christ, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



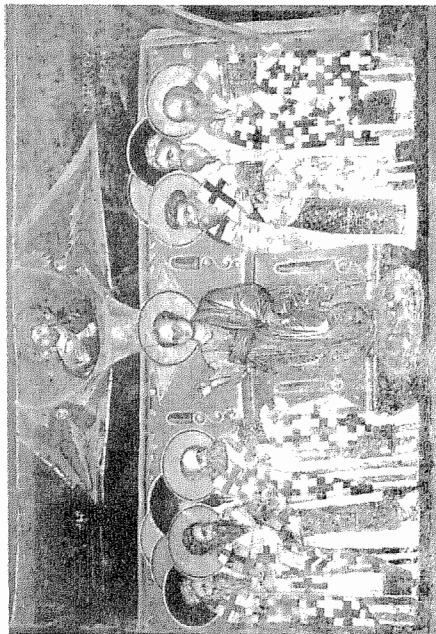
580. Oikos 15, Double Nature, Skopelos Icon



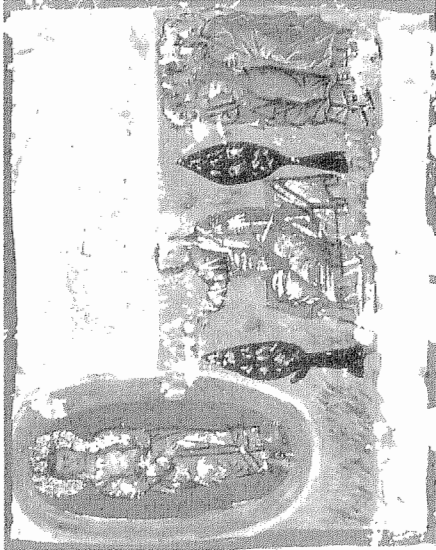
581. Stanza 15, Double Nature, Uspenskij Icon



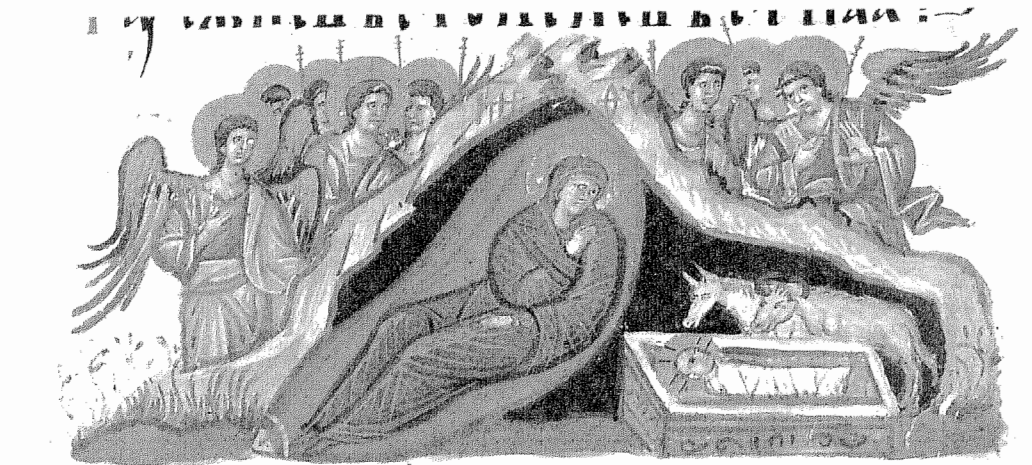
582. Stanza 15, Double Nature, St. Ferapont, 1500-1502



583. Stanza 15, Double Nature of Christ, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



584. Stanza 15, Double Nature, Serbian Psalter, end 14th c.



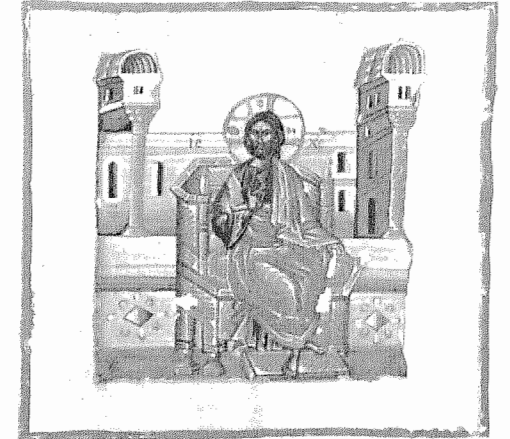
589. Stanza 16, Nativity - Astounded Angels, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360



587. Oikos 15, Double Nature, Synodal gr. 429



585. Oikos 15, Double Nature, Orphanos



588. Oikos 15, Double Nature, Escorial R.I.19



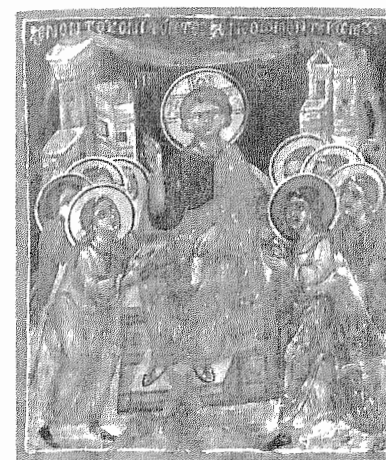
586. Stanza 15, Double Nature, Cozia



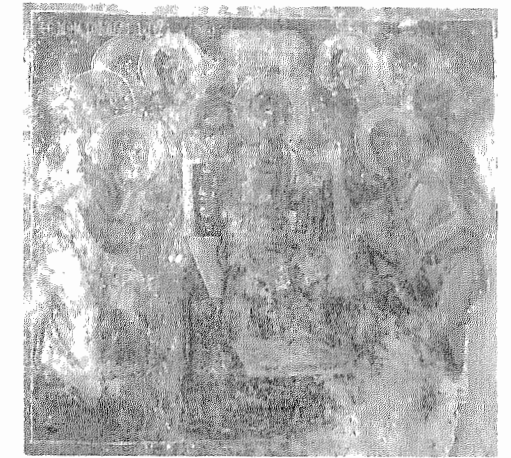
590. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Skopelos Icon



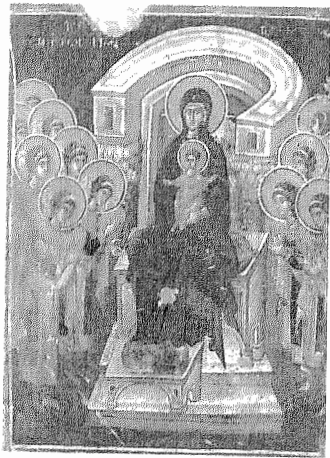
591. Stanza 16, Nativity, Serbian Psalter



596. Oikos 14(16), Roustika, Crete



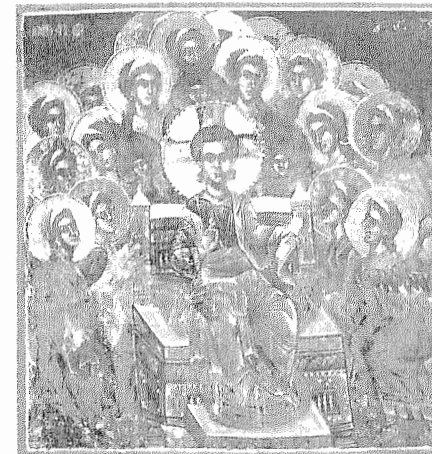
597. Oikos 14(16), Astounded Angels, Meronas, Crete



592. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, St. Nicholas Orphanos, ca. 1315 A.D.



593. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Hodegetria Monastery, Kainourgion Province, Crete



598. Oikos 16, Valsamonero, Crete, ca. 1430



599. Stanza 16, Astounded Angels, Uspenskij Icon



594. Stanza 16, Astounded Angels, Decani



595. Stanza 16, Astounded Angels, Matejce



600. Oikos 16, Ochrid



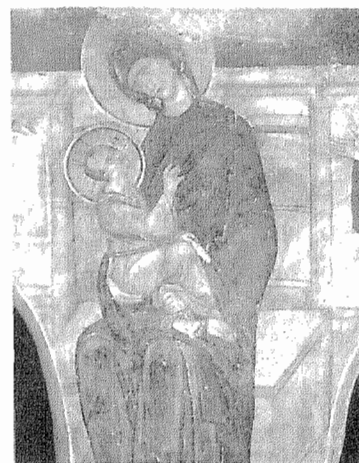
601. Stanza 16, Astounded Angels, St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-81 A.D.



602. Stanza 16, Astounded angels, Cozia



603. Oikos 16, Astounded Angels, Escorial R.I.19



608. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Elason



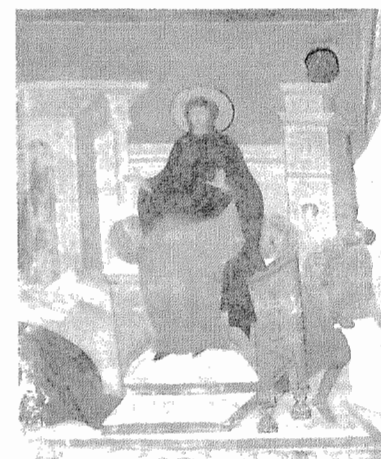
609. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Skopelos Icon



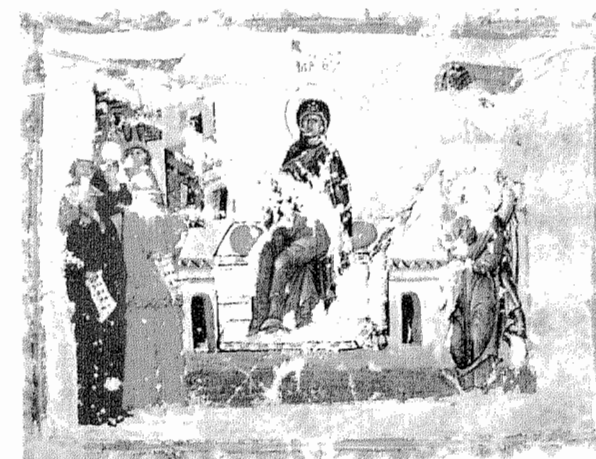
604. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Ochrid



605. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Vori, Crete



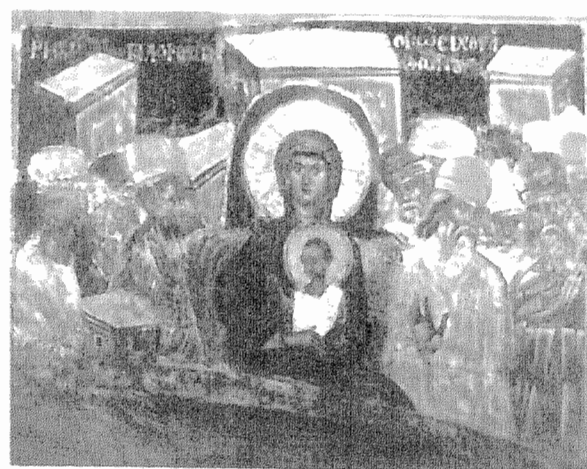
610. Stanza 17, St. Ferapont



611. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Synodal gr. 429, ca. 1360



606. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Roustika



607. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Valsamonero, Crete



612. Stanza 17, Uspenskij Icon



613. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Escorial R.I.19



614. Stanza 17, Voiceless Orators, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



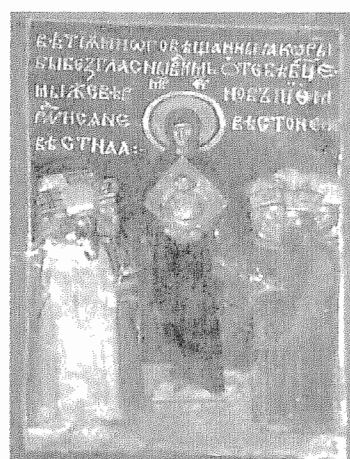
619. Oikos 18, Salvation of the World, Synodal



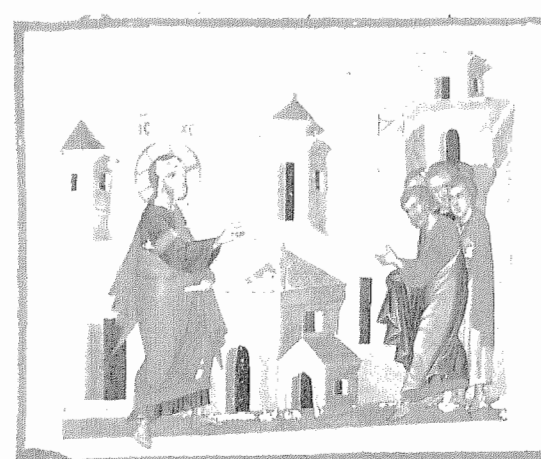
620. Oikos 18, Elasson



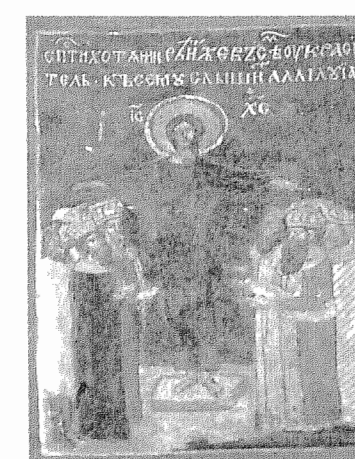
615. Stanza 17, Serbian Psalter



616. Oikos 17, Voiceless Orators, Cozia



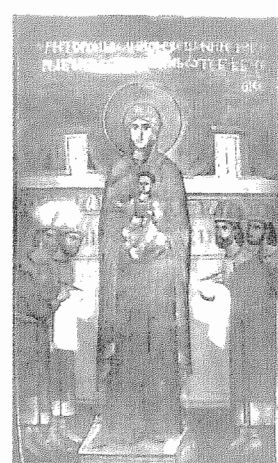
621. Oikos 18, The Salvation of the World, Escorial



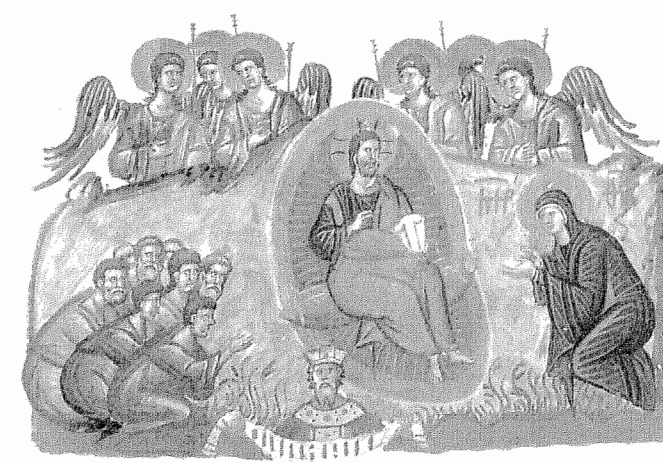
622. Stanza 18, Cozia



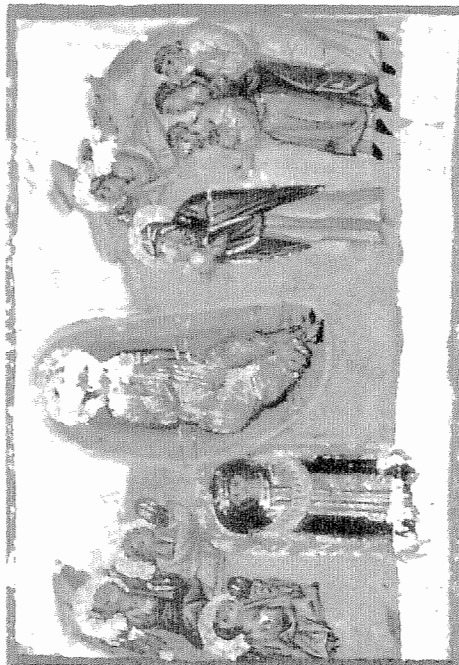
617. Stanza 17, Voiceless Orators, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



618. Stanza 17, Decani



623. Stanza 18, The Salvation of the World, Tomic Psalter, ca. 1360 A.D.



624. Stanza 18, Salvation of the World, Serbian Psalter



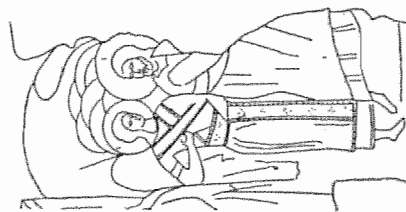
625. Oikos 18, Salvation of the World, Skopelos Icon



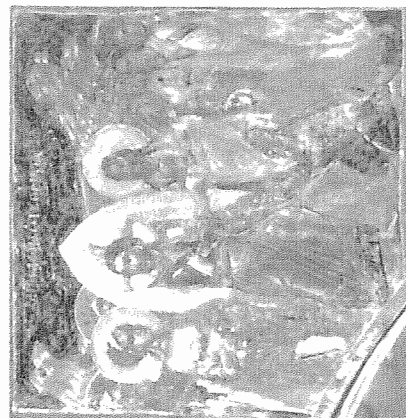
626. Stanza 18, Decani



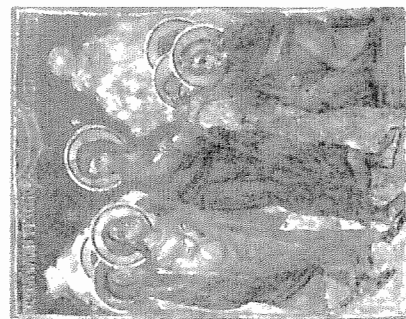
627. Stanza 18, Salvation of the World, Marko



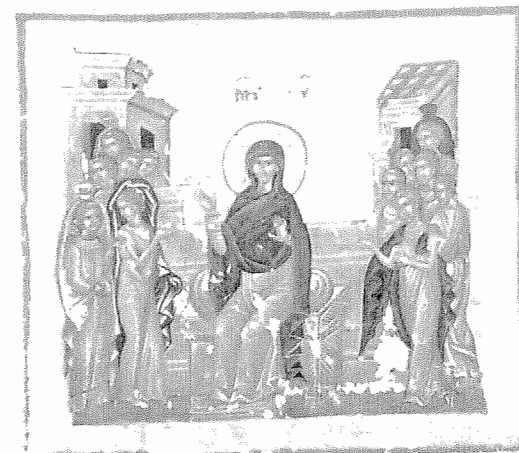
628. Stanza 18, Ochrid



629. Oikos 18, Salvation, Valsamonero



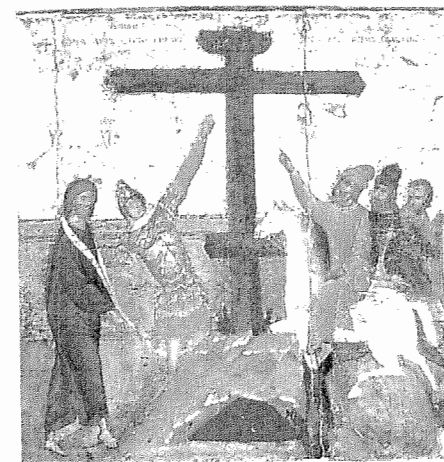
630. Oikos 18, Roustika



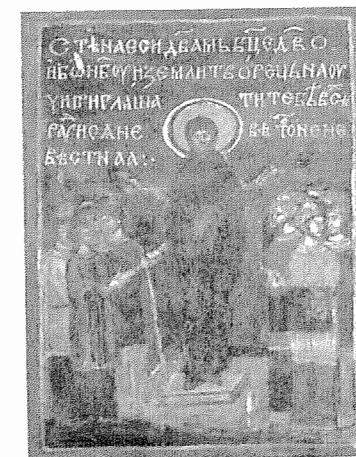
635. Oikos 19, Defence of Virgins, Escorial R.I.19



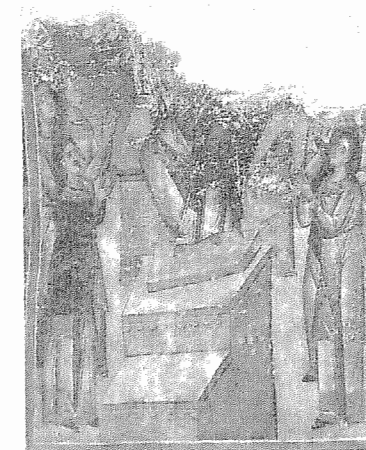
633. Oikos 19, Defence of Virgins, Synodal gr 429, ca. 1360



631. Stanza 18, Salvation of the World, Uspenskij Icon



636. Stanza 19, Defence of Virgins, Cozia



634. Oikos 19, Olympiotissa, Elasson



632. Stanza 18, Salvation, St. Ferapont



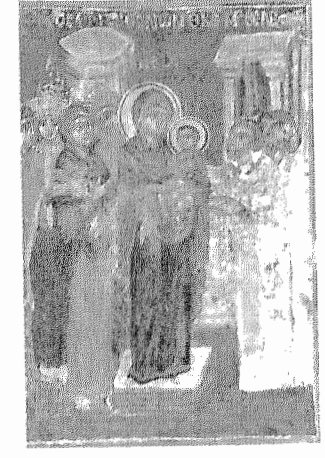
637. Stanza 19, Defence of Virgins, Decani, 1348-50 A.D.



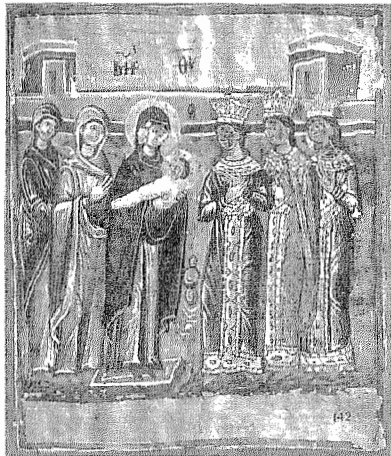
638. Stanza 19, The Defence of Virgins, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



642. Oikos 19, Defence of Virgins, Skopelos Icon



643. Oikos 19, Roustika, 1390-91



639. Stanza 19, Belgrade Psalter



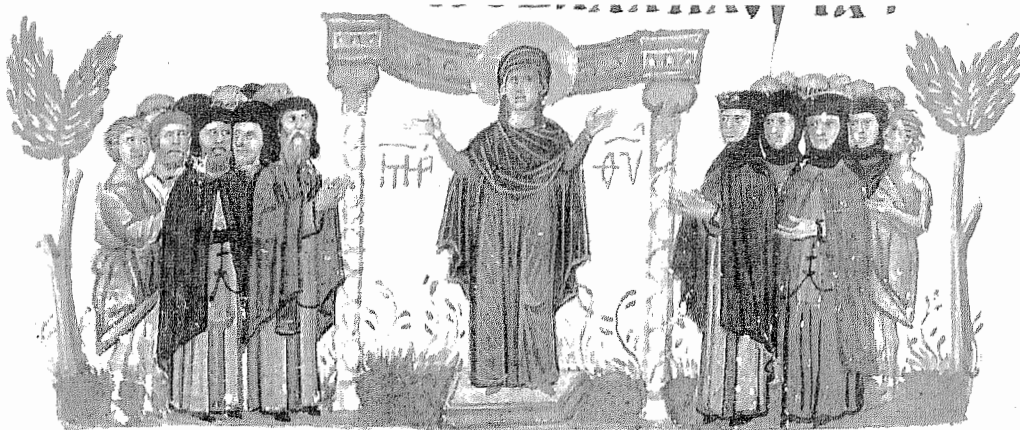
640. Stanza 19, Defence of Virgins, Uspenskij Icon



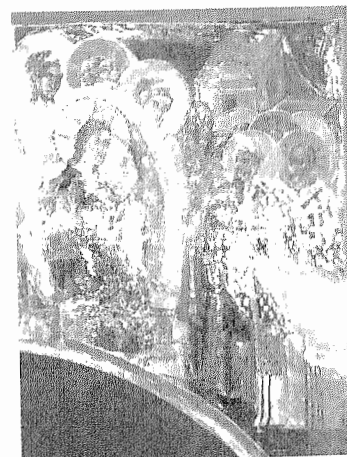
644. Oikos 19, The Defence of Virgins, St. Phanourios, Valsamonero, Kainourgion, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



645. Oikos 20, Defeated Hymns, Roustika, Crete, 1390-91 A.D.



641. Stanza 19, Defence of Virgins, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360



646. Oikos 20, Defeated Hymns, Valsamonero, ca. 1430 A.D.



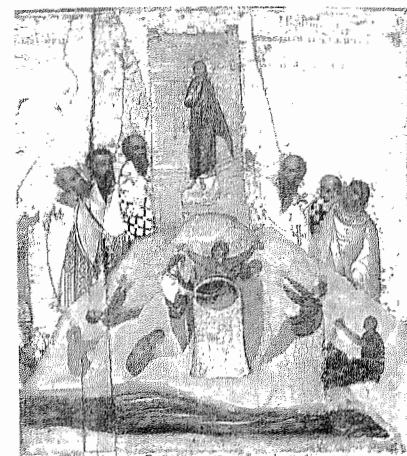
647. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



648. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Belgrade Psalter, 17th century



649. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, MS. Synodal gr. 429, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



653. Stanza 20, Defeated Hymns, Uspenskij Icon



654. Stanza 20, Defeated Hymns, St. Ferapont



650. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Akathistos Icon, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century



651. Oikos 20, The Defeated Hymns, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 26ro, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



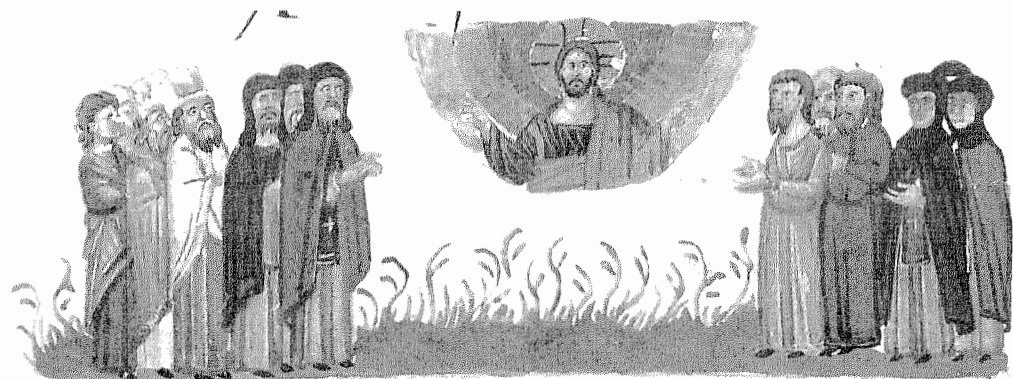
655. Oikos 20, Defeated Hymns, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



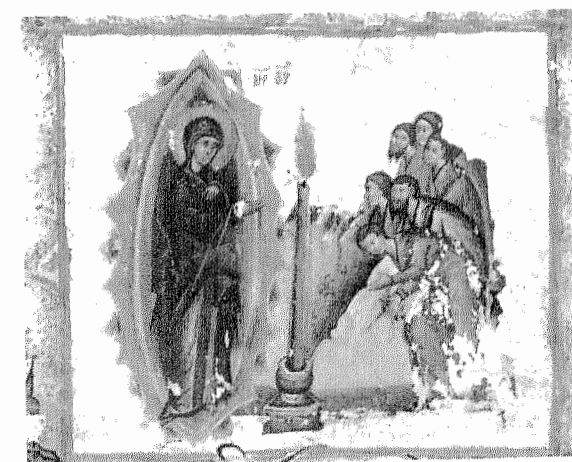
656. Stanza 20, Defeated Hymns, Valachia, Cozia, ca. 1390 A.D.



657. Stanza 20, Defeated Hymns, Decani, 1348-50



652. Stanza 20, The Defeated Hymns, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360



658. Oikos 21, Shining Lamp, Synodal gr. 429, ca. 1360 A.D.



659. Stanza 21, Shining Lamp, Cozia



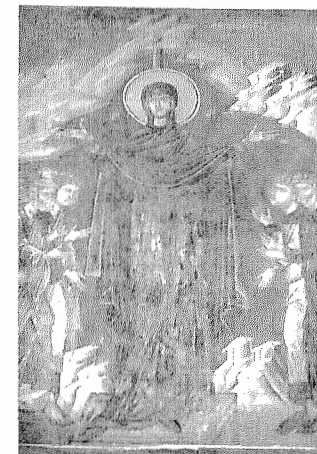
660. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Codex R.I. 19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



661. Stanza 21, The Shining Lamp, St. Ferapont, 1500-1502 A.D.



665. Oikos 21, Shining Lamp, Elasson



666. Stanza 21, Shining Lamp, Matejce



662. Oikos 21, The Shining Lamp, Akathistos Icon, Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century



663. Stanza 21, Shining Lamp, Akathistos Icon, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow, 14th c.



667. Stanza 21, Decani



668. Oikos 21, Shining Lamp, St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-81 A.D.



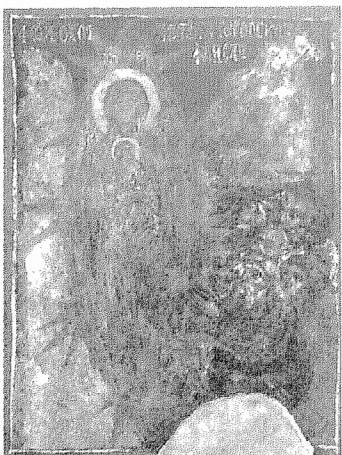
664. Stanza 21, Shining Lamp, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



669. Oikos 21, Shining Lamp, Valsamonero



670. Oikos 21, Shining Lamp, Ochrid



671. Oikos 21, Shining Lamp, Roustika



672. Stanza 21, Shining Lamp, Belgrade Psalter



677. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-81 A.D.



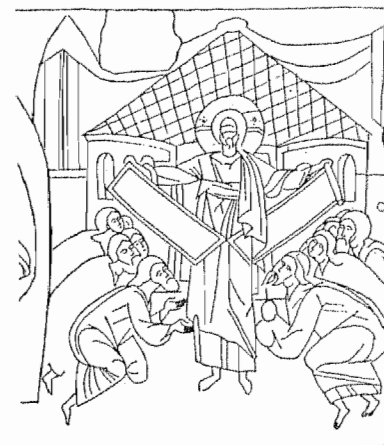
678. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Belgrade Psalter, 17th century



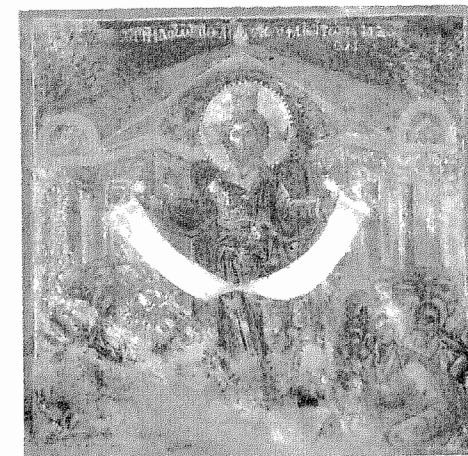
673. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Codex R.I.19, fol. 24vo, Escorial, ca. 1400 A.D.



674. Stanza 22, Cancellation of Old Debts, Cozia, ca. 1390



679. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



680. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Valsamonero, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



675. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Synodal gr. 429, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



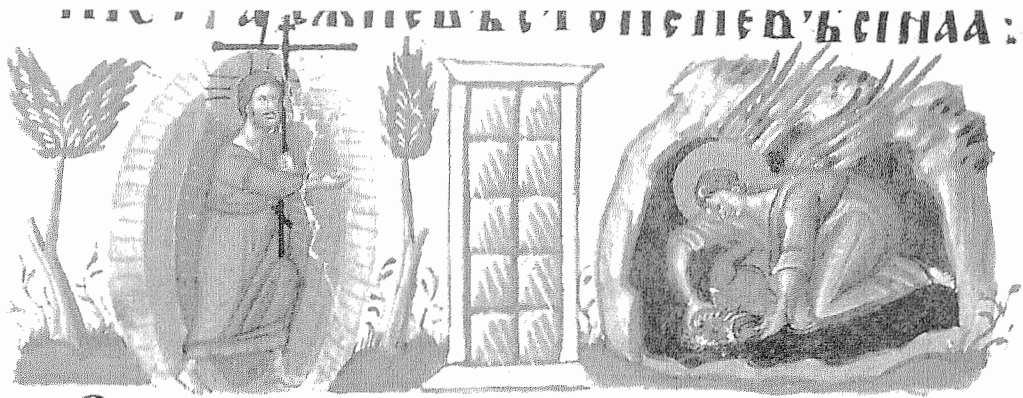
676. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Matejce, 1356-60 A.D.



681. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Roustika, 1390-91



682. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Meronas, Crete, ca. 1400



683. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Tomic Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



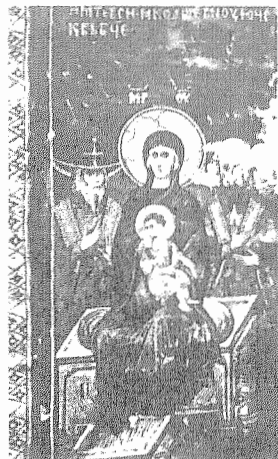
684. Oikos 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Akathistos Icon, Livadi, Skopelos, first half of the 15th century



685. Stanza 22, Cancellation of the Old Debts, St. Ferapont, 1500-1502



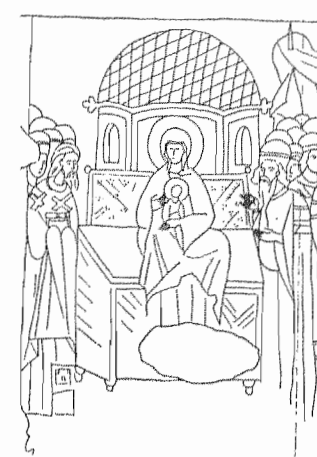
686. Stanza 22, The Cancellation of the Old Debts, Akathistos Icon, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow, 14th c.



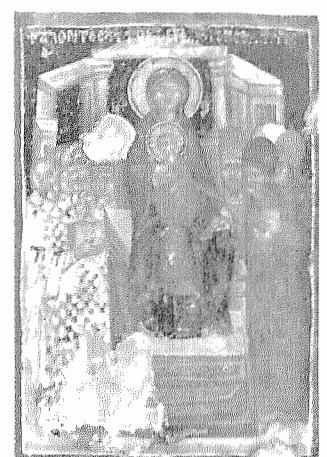
687. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Decani



688. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Skopelos Icon



689. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



690. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Roustika, Crete



691. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Valsamonero



692. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Vori



693. Oikos 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Meronas



694. Stanza 23, Belgrade Psalter



695. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Tomic Psalter, Historical Museum, Moscow, ca. 1360 A.D.



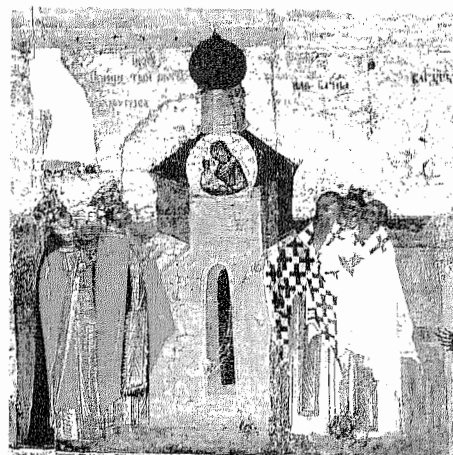
696. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Matejce, 1356-60



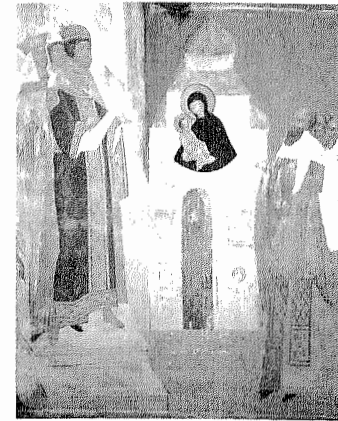
697. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, Katholikon of the Holy Trinity, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



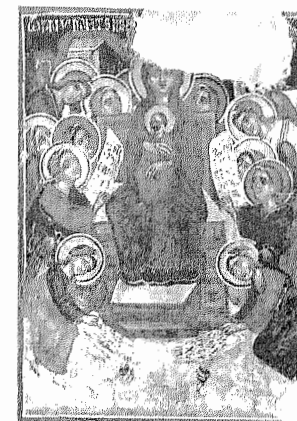
698. Stanza 23, Singing Your Giving Birth, St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-1381 A.D.



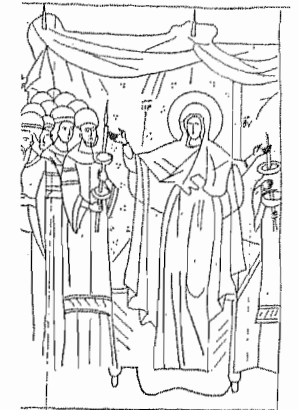
699. Stanza 23, The Living Temple, Akathistos Icon, Uspenskij Sobor, Moscow, 14th century



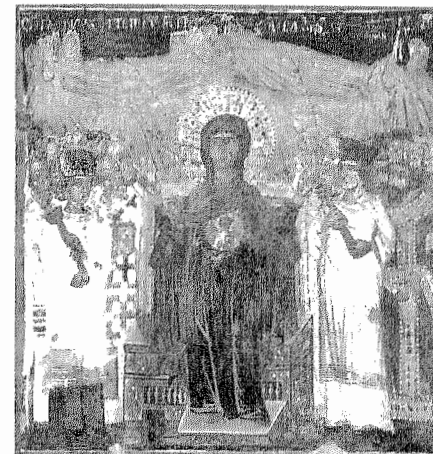
700. Stanza 23, Living Temple, St. Ferapont Monastery, 1500-1502



701. Oikos 24, Offering of the Hymn, Roustika, 1390-91 A.D.



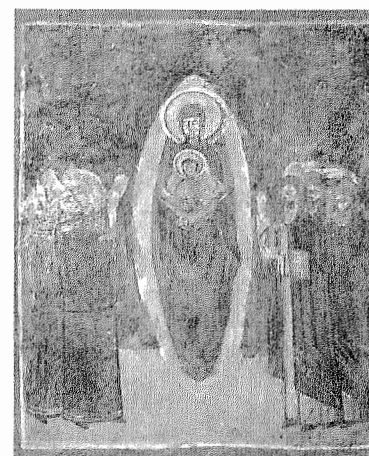
702. Oikos 24, Offering of the Hymn, Ochrid, 1365 A.D.



703. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Valsamonero, Crete, ca. 1430 A.D.



704. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Vori, Pyrgiotissa, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.



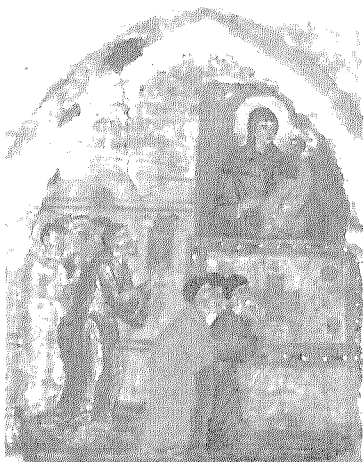
705. Stanza 24, Offering of the Hymn, Cozia, Valachia, ca. 1390 A.D.



706. Oikos 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin, Synodal gr. 429, ca. 1360 A.D.



707. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin. Tomic Psalter, ca. 1360 A.D



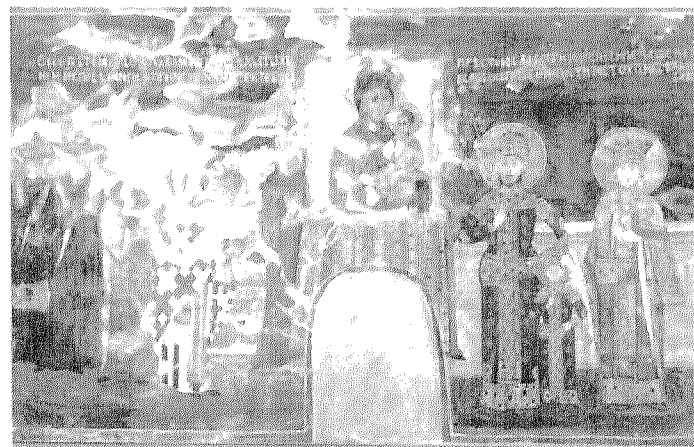
708. Oikos 24, Offering of the Hymn, Skopelos Icon, 1st h. 15th c.



709. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin, Church of St. Demetrius, Marko, 1376-81 A.D



710. Stanza 24, Offering of the Hymn, Matejce, 1356-60 A.D.



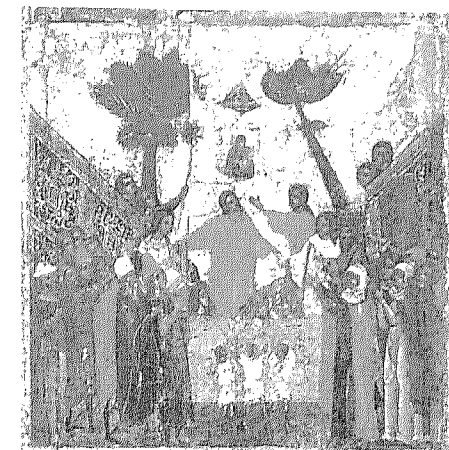
711. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn - Veneration of the Icon of the Virgin, Pantokrator Church, Decani, 1348-1350 A.D.



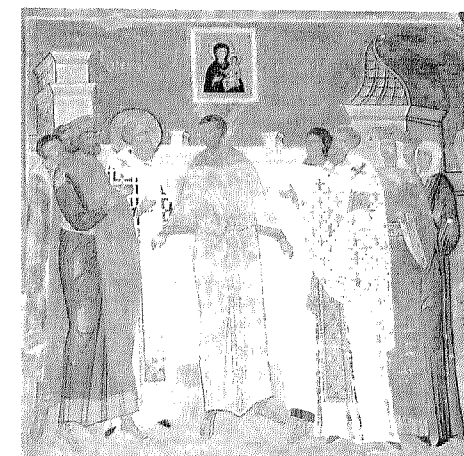
712. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Serbian Psalter, last quarter of the 14th c.



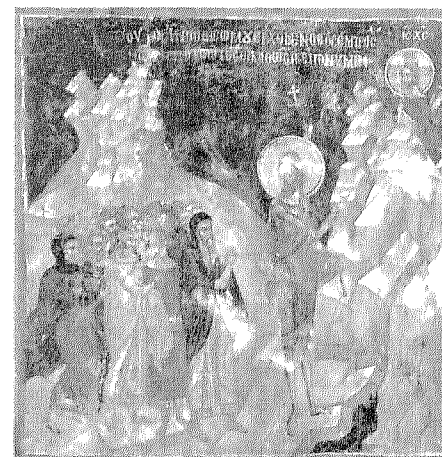
714. Prooemium, Uspenskij Icon, Moscow



713. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Uspenskij Icon, Moscow, 14th century



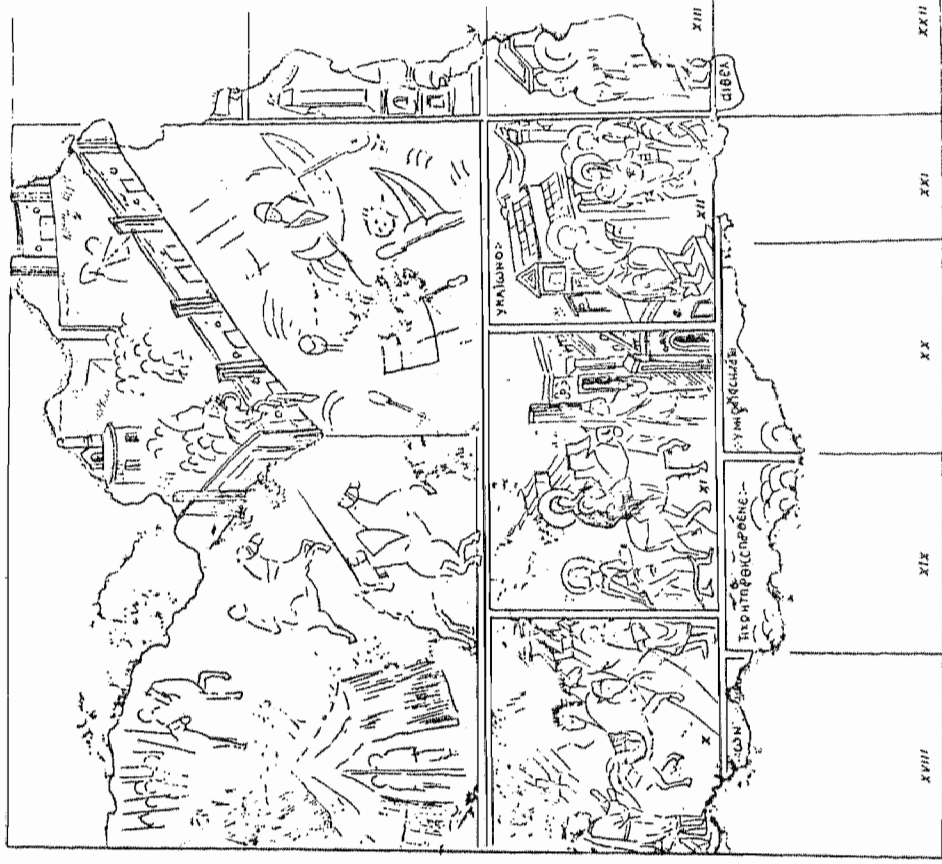
715. Stanza 24, The Offering of the Hymn, Ferapont



716. St. John the Baptist preaching, Monastery of St. Phanourios at Valsamonero, Crete



717. The Virgin pulling monk Kaloeidas out of his sarcophagus, MS. Christ Church gr. 61, 1391 A.D.



718. Proemium and Oikoi 10-12, St. Peter on the island Veliki Grad, Prespa Lake, ca. 1360



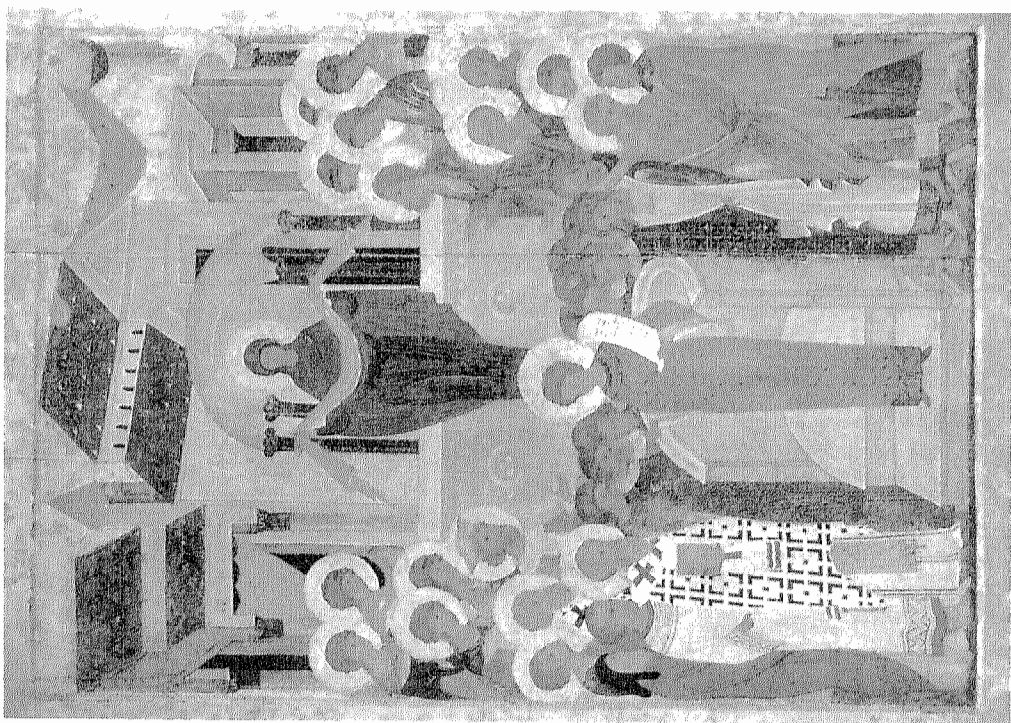
719. Usjuk Annunciation, Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, ca. 1200 A.D.



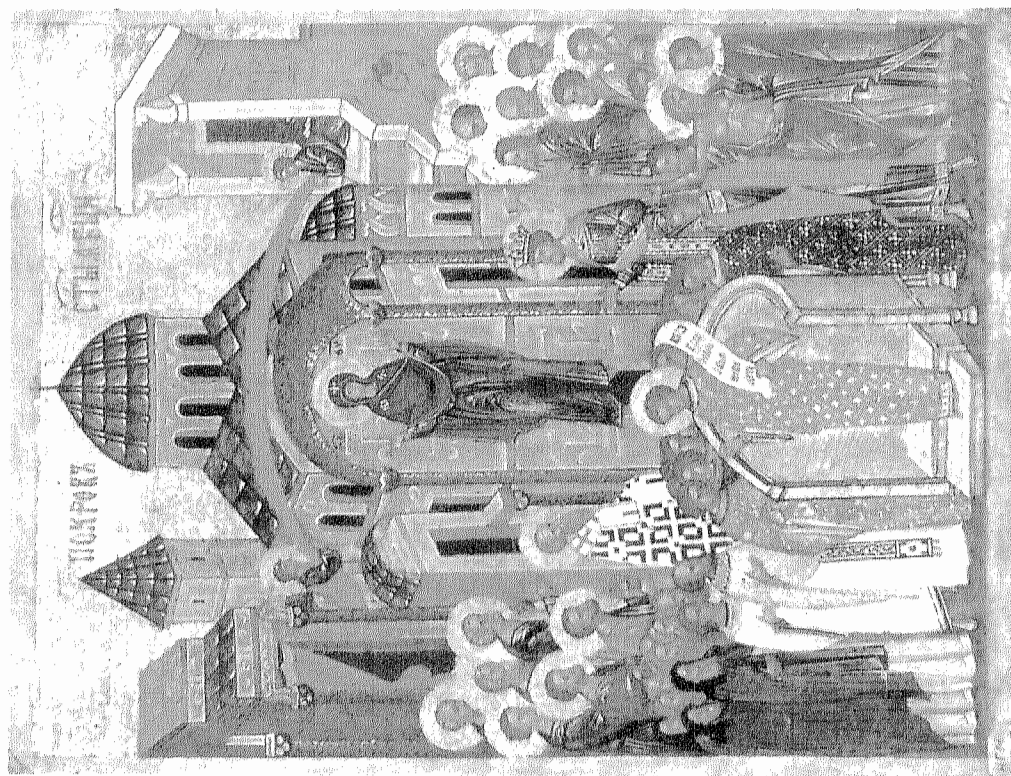
720. San Bernardino Madonna, Siena, Pinacoteca, ca. 1270 A.D.



721. Virgin Cheirophilousa, Vatopedi, Athos, fresco ca. 1600, silver 1859 A.D.



722. The Protecting Veil (Pokrov), Icon, Vladimir-Suzdal Museum, ca. 1500



723. The Protecting Veil (Pokrov), Bilateral Icon, St. Sophia, Novgorod, ca. 1500



725. St. Gelasios and Coat of Arms of the Kallergis Family, Meronas



724. The Enrolment for Taxation, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari Province, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.



726. Dedicatory Inscription, Church of the Panagia, Meronas, Amari Province, Crete, ca. 1400 A.D.